THE

POEMS

OF

Mr. GRAY.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

MEMOIRS

OF HIS

LIFE and WRITINGS,

BY

W. MASON, M.A.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE and WRITINGS

OF

Mr. GRAY.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING

The FIRST and SECOND SECTIONS.

EST ADHUC HOMINIBUS ET CURA ET OFFICIUM:
SUNT QUI DEFUNCTORUM QUOQUE AMICOS AGANT.
PLINII EPIST.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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MEMOIRS

20 AU 66

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE and WRITINGS

OF

Mr. GRAY.

SECTION THE FIRST.

THE lives of men of letters ſeldom abound with incidents; and perhaps no life ever afforded fewer than that which I have undertaken to write. But I am far from mentioning this by way of previous apology, as is the trite cuſtom of biographers. The reſpect which I owe to my deceaſed friend; to the public, and (let me add) to myſelf, prompts me to wave ſo impertinent a ceremonial. A

reader of ſenſe and taſte never expects to find in the memoirs of a Philoſopher, or Poet, the ſame ſpecies of entertainment, or information, which he would receive from thoſe of a Stateſman or General: He expects, however, to be either informed or entertained: Nor would he be diſappointed, did the writer take care to dwell principally on ſuch topics as characterize the man, and diſtinguiſh that peculiar part which he acted in the varied Drama of Society. But this rule, ſelf-evidently right as it may ſeem, is ſeldom obſerved. It was ſaid, with almoſt as much truth as wit, of one of theſe writers, that, when he compoſed the life of Lord Verulam, he forgot that he was a Philoſopher; and therefore, it was to be feared, ſhould he finiſh that of the Duke of Marlborough, he would forget that he was a General. I ſhall avoid a like fault. I will promiſe my reader that he ſhall, in the following pages, ſeldom behold Mr. Gray in any other light than that of a Scholar and a Poet: And though I am more ſolicitous to ſhew that he was a virtuous, a friendly, and an amiable man, than either; yet this ſolicitude becomes unneceſſary from the very papers which he has bequeathed me, and which I here arrange for the purpoſe: Since in theſe the qualities of his head and heart ſo conſtantly appear together, and the fertility of his

fancy

fancy ſo intimately unites with the ſympathetic tenderneſs of his ſoul, that were it in my intention, I ſhould find it impoſſible to disjoin them.

His parents were reputable citizens of London. His grandfather a conſiderable merchant: but his father, Mr. Philip Gray, tho' he alſo followed buſineſs, was of an indolent and reſerved temper; and therefore rather diminiſhed than increaſed his paternal fortune. He had many children, of whom Thomas, the ſubject of theſe memoirs, was the fifth born. All of them, except him, died in their infancy; and I have been told that he narrowly eſcaped ſuffocation, (owing to too great a fullneſs of blood which deſtroyed the reſt) and would certainly have been cut off as early, had not his mother, with a courage remarkable for one of her ſex, and withal ſo very tender a parent, ventured to open a vein with her own hand, which inſtantly removed the paroxyſm.

He was born in Cornhill, December the 26th, 1716; was educated at Eton ſchool, under the care of Mr. Antrobus, his mother's brother, who was at that time one of the aſſiſtant maſters, and alſo a Fellow of St. Peter's College, Cambridge, to which place Mr. Gray

 removed,

removed, and was there admitted a penſioner in the year 1734. While at ſchool, he contracted a friendſhip with Mr. Horace Walpole and Mr. Richard Weſt: The former of theſe appears, at preſent, with too much diſtinction in the literary, as well as faſhionable world, to make it neceſſary I ſhould enlarge upon his ſubject: But as the latter died before he could exert his uncommon abilities, it ſeems requiſite to premiſe ſomewhat concerning him; eſpecially as almoſt every anecdote which I have to produce, concerning the juvenile part of Mr. Gray's life, is included in his correſpondence with this gentleman. A correſpondence which continued, with very little interruption, for the ſpace of about eight years, from the time of their leaving ſchool to the death of the accompliſhed youth in queſtion.

His father was Lord Chancellor of Ireland. His grandfather, by the mother, the famous Biſhop Burnet. He removed from Eton to Oxford, about the ſame time that Mr. Gray left that place for Cambridge. Each of them carried with him the reputation of an excellent claſſic ſcholar; though I have been told that, at the time, Mr. Weſt's genius was reckoned the more brilliant of the two: A judgment which, I conceive, was

was not well founded; for though Mr. Weſt's part of that correſpondence, which I ſhall ſpeedily give the reader *, will undoubtedly ſhew that he poſſeſt very extraordinary

NOTE.

* I am well aware that I am here going to do a thing which the cautious and courtly Dr. Sprat, (were he now alive) would highly cenſure. He had, it ſeems, a large collection of his friend Mr. Cowley's letters, "a way of "writing in which he peculiarly excelled, as in theſe he "always expreſſed the native tenderneſs and innocent gaiety "of his heart; yet the Doctor was of opinion that nothing "of this nature ſhould be publiſhed, and that the letters "that paſs between particular friends (if they are written as "they ought to be) can ſcarce ever be fit to ſee the light." What! not when they expreſs the native tenderneſs and innocent gaiety of a heart like Mr. Cowley's? No, by no means, "for in ſuch letters the ſouls of men appear un-"dreſſed, and in that negligent habit they may be fit to be "ſeen by one or two in a chamber, but not to go abroad "in the ſtreet." *See Life of Cowley, page* 38, *Hurd's Edition.*

Such readers as believe it incumbent on every well-bred ſoul never to appear but in full dreſs, will think that Dr. Sprat has reaſon on his ſide; but I ſuſpect that the generality will, notwithſtanding, wiſh he had been leſs ſcrupulouſly delicate, and lament that the letters in queſtion are not now

extraordinary talents, yet, on Mr. Gray's ſide, there ſeems ſuperadded to theſe, ſuch a manly preciſion of taſte, and maturity of judgment, as would induce one to believe Mr. Walpole's phraſe not very hyperbolical, who has often aſſerted to me that "Gray never was a Boy."

In April, 1738, Mr. Weſt left Chriſt Church for the Inner Temple, and Mr. Gray removed from Peter-Houſe to Town the latter end of that year; intending alſo to apply himſelf to the ſtudy of the Law in the ſame ſociety: For which purpoſe his father had already either hired or bought him a ſet of chambers. But on an invitation which Mr. Walpole gave him to be his companion in his travels, this intention was laid aſide for the preſent, and never after put in execution.

According to the plan which I have formed for arranging theſe papers, a part of the letters which I have already

NOTE.

now extant. Of one thing I am fully confident that, had this been the caſe, the judicious Dr. Hurd would have found his critical labour much leſſened, when, in pure charity to this amiable writer, he lately employed himſelf in ſeparating

His pleaſing moral from his pointed wit.

already mentioned will here find their proper place. They will give a much clearer idea both of Mr. Gray and his friend, at this early period, than any narrative of mine. They will include alſo ſeveral ſpecimens of their juvenile compoſitions, and, at the ſame time, mark the progreſs they had made in literature. They will aſcertain, not only the ſcope and turn of their genius, but of their temper. In a word, Mr. Gray will become his own biographer, both in this and the reſt of the ſections into which I divide this work. By which means, and by the aſſiſtance of a few notes which I ſhall occaſionally add, it may be hoped that nothing will be omitted which may tend to give a regular and clear delineation of his life and character.

But as this is the earlieſt part of their correſpondence, and includes only the time which paſſed between Mr. Gray's admiſſion into the univerſity and his going abroad, it may be reaſonably expected that the manner rather than the matter of theſe letters muſt conſtitute their principal merit; they will therefore be chiefly acceptable to ſuch ingenuous youths, who, being about the ſame age, have a reliſh for the ſame ſtudies, and boſoms ſuſceptible of the ſame warmth of friendſhip. To theſe I addreſs them; in the pleaſing hope that they

they may prompt them to emulate their elegant ſimplicity, and, of courſe, to ſtudy with more care the claſſic models from which it was derived. If they do this, I ſhall not be much concerned if graver readers think them unimportant or even trifling.

LETTER I.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

YOU uſe me very cruelly: You have ſent me but one letter ſince I have been at Oxford, and that too agreeable not to make me ſenſible how great my loſs is in not having more. Next to ſeeing you is the pleaſure of ſeeing your hand-writing; next to hearing you is the pleaſure of hearing from you. Really and ſincerely I wonder at you, that you thought it not worth while to anſwer my laſt letter. I hope this will have better ſucceſs in behalf of your quondam ſchool-fellow; in behalf of one who has walked hand in hand with you, like the two children in the wood,

Thro'

Thro' many a flowery path and ſhelly grot,
Where learning lull'd us in her private * maze.

The very thought, you ſee, tips my pen with poetry, and brings Eton to my view. Conſider me very ſeriouſly here in a ſtrange country, inhabited by things that call themſelves Doctors and Maſters of Arts; a country flowing with ſyllogiſms and ale, where Horace and Virgil are equally unknown; conſider me, I ſay, in this melancholy light, and then think if ſomething be not due to Yours.

Chriſt Church, Nov. 14, 1735.

P. S. I deſire you will ſend me ſoon, and truly and poſitively, † a hiſtory of your own time.

LETTER

NOTES.

* This expreſſion prettily diſtinguiſhes their ſtudies when out of the public ſchool, which would naturally, at their age, be vague and deſultory.

† Alluding to his grandfather's hiſtory.

LETTER II.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

PERMIT me again to write to you, though I have ſo long neglected my duty, and forgive my brevity, when I tell you it is occaſioned wholly by the hurry I am in to get to a place where I expect to meet with no other pleaſure than the ſight of you; for I am preparing for London in a few days at furtheſt. I do not wonder in the leaſt at your frequent blaming my indolence, it ought rather to be called ingratitude, and I am obliged to your goodneſs for ſoftening ſo harſh an appellation. When we meet it will, however, be my greateſt of pleaſures to know what you do, what you read, and how you ſpend your time, &c. &c. and to tell you what I do not read, and how I do not, &c. for almoſt all the employment of my hours may be beſt explained by negatives; take my word and experience upon it, doing nothing is a moſt amuſing buſineſs; and yet neither ſomething nor nothing gives me any pleaſure. When you have ſeen one of my days, you have ſeen a whole year of my life; they go round and round like the blind horſe in the mill, only he has the ſatiſfaction

faction of fancying he makes a progreſs, and gets ſome ground; my eyes are open enough to ſee the ſame dull proſpect, and to know that having made four-and-twenty ſteps more, I ſhall be juſt where I was; I may, better than moſt people, ſay my life is but a ſpan, were I not afraid leſt you ſhould not believe that a perſon ſo ſhort-lived could write even ſo long a letter as this; in ſhort, I believe I muſt not ſend you the hiſtory of my own time, till I can ſend you that alſo of the reformation *. However, as the moſt undeſerving people in the world muſt ſure have the vanity to wiſh ſomebody had a regard for them, ſo I need not wonder at my own, in being pleaſed that you care about me. You need not doubt, therefore, of having a firſt row in the front box of my little heart, and I believe you are not in danger of being crowded there; it is aſking you to an old play, indeed, but you will be candid enough to excuſe the whole piece for the ſake of a few tolerable lines.

For this little while paſt I have been playing with Statius; we yeſterday had a game at quoits together; you

NOTE.

* Carrying on the alluſion to the other hiſtory written by Mr. Weſt's grandfather.

you will eaſily forgive me for having broke his head, as you have a little pique to him. I ſend you my tranſlation *, which I did not engage in becauſe I liked that part of the Poem, nor do I now ſend it to you becauſe I think it deſerves it, but merely to ſhew you how I miſpend my days.

Third in the labours of the Diſc came on,
With ſturdy ſtep and ſlow, Hippomedon;
Artful and ſtrong he pois'd the well-known weight,
By Phlegyas warn'd, and fir'd by Mneſtheus' fate,
That to avoid, and this to emulate.
His vigorous arm he try'd before he flung,
Brac'd all his nerves, and every ſinew ſtrung;

Then

NOTE.

* This conſiſted of about 110 lines, which were ſent ſeparately, and as I believe it was Mr. Gray's firſt attempt in Engliſh verſe, it is a curioſity not to be entirely withheld from the reader, although it is not my intention to fill theſe Memoirs with much either of his or his correſpondent's productions in this way, yet as a few lines will ſhew how much Mr. Gray had imbibed of Dryden's ſpirited manner, at this early period, I inſert at the end of the letter a ſpecimen of the whole.

Then with a tempeſt's whirl and wary eye,
Purſu'd his caſt, and hurl'd the orb on high;
The orb on high tenacious of its courſe,
True to the mighty arm that gave it force,
Far overleaps all bound, and joys to ſee
Its ancient lord ſecure of victory.
The theatre's green height and woody wall
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall,
The ponderous maſs ſinks in the cleaving ground,
While vales and woods and echoing hills rebound.
As when from Ætna's ſmoking ſummit broke,
The eyeleſs Cyclops heav'd the craggy rock;
Where Ocean frets beneath the daſhing oar,
And parting ſurges round the veſſel roar;
'Twas there he aim'd the meditated harm,
And ſcarce Ulyſſes ſcap'd his giant arm.
A tyger's pride the victor bore away,
With native ſpots and artful labour gay,
A ſhining border round the margin roll'd,
And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold.

Cambridge, May 8, 1736.

LETTER

LETTER III.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

I Agree with you that you have broke Statius's head, but it is in like manner as Apollo broke Hyacinth's, you have foiled him infinitely at his own weapon: I muſt inſiſt on ſeeing the reſt of your tranſlation, and then I will examine it entire, and compare it with the Latin, and be very wiſe and ſevere, and put on an inflexible face, ſuch as becomes the character of a true ſon of Ariſtarchus, of hyper-critical memory. In the mean while,

And calm'd the terrors of his claws in gold,

Is exactly Statius—Summos auro manſueverat ungues. I never knew before that the golden fangs on hammer-cloths were ſo old a faſhion. Your Hymenêal * I was told

NOTE.

* Publiſhed in the Cambridge collection of verſes on the Prince of Wales's marriage. I have not thought it neceſſary to inſert theſe hexameters, as adulatory verſes of this kind, however well written, deſerve not to be tranſmitted to poſterity; and, indeed, are uſually buried, as they ought to be, in

told was the beſt in the Cambridge Collection before I ſaw it, and, indeed, it is no great compliment to tell you I thought it ſo when I had ſeen it, but ſincerely it pleaſed me beſt. Methinks the college bards have run into a ſtrange taſte on this occaſion. Such ſoft unmeaning ſtuff about Venus and Cupid, and Peleus and Thetis, and Zephyrs and Dryads, was never read. As for my poor little Eclogue it has been condemned and beheaded by our Weſtminſter judges; an exordium of about ſixteen lines abſolutely cut off, and its other limbs quartered in a moſt barbarous manner. I will ſend it you in my next as my true and lawful heir, in excluſion of the pretender, who has the impudence to appear under my name.

As yet I have not looked into Sir Iſaac. Public diſputations I hate; mathematics I reverence; hiſtory, morality, and natural philoſophy have the greateſt charms

NOTE.

in the traſh with which they are ſurrounded. Every perſon, who feels himſelf a poet, ought to be above proſtituting his powers on ſuch occaſions; and extreme youth (as was the caſe with Mr. Gray) is the only thing that can apologize for his having done it.

charms in my eye; but who can forget poetry? they call it idleneſs, but it is ſurely the moſt enchanting thing in the world, "ac dulce otium & pœne omni negotio pulchrius."

I am, dear Sir, yours while I am

Chriſt Church, May 24, 1736. R. W.

The following letter ſeems to require ſome little preface, not ſo much as it expreſſes Mr. Gray's juvenile ſentiments concerning the mode of our academical education, as that theſe ſentiments prevailed with him through life, and that he often declared them, with ſo little reſerve, as to create him many enemies. It is certain that at the time when he was admitted, and for ſome years after, Jacobitiſm, and its concomitant hard drinking, prevailed ſtill at Cambridge, much to the prejudice not only of good manners but of good letters; for, if this ſpirit was then on the decline, it was not extinguiſhed till after the year 1745. But we ſee (as was natural enough in a young man) he laid the blame rather on the mode of education than the mode of the times; and to this error, the uncommon proficiency he had made at Eton in claſſical learning might contribute, as he found himſelf in a ſituation where that

ſpecies

ſpecies of merit held not the firſt rank. However this be, it was neceſſary not to omit this feature of his mind, when employed in drawing a general likeneſs of it; and what colours could be found ſo forcible as his own to expreſs its true light and ſhadow? I would further obſerve, that whatever truth there might be in his ſatire at the time it was written, it can by no means affect the preſent ſtate of the univerſity. There is uſually a much greater fluctuation of taſte and manners in an academical, than a national body; occaſioned (to uſe a ſcholaſtic metaphor) by that very quick ſucceſſion of its component parts, which often goes near to deſtroy its perſonal identity. Whatever therefore may be true of ſuch a ſociety at one time, may be, and generally is, ten years after abſolutely falſe.

LETTER IV.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

YOU muſt know that I do not take degrees, and, after this term, ſhall have nothing more of College impertinencies to undergo, which I truſt will be ſome pleaſure to you, as it is a great one to me. I

have endured lectures daily and hourly ſince I came laſt, ſupported by the hopes of being ſhortly at full liberty to give myſelf up to my friends and claſſical companions, who, poor ſouls! though I ſee them fallen into great contempt with moſt people here, yet I cannot help ſticking to them, and out of a ſpirit of obſtinacy (I think) love them the better for it; and indeed, what can I do elſe? Muſt I plunge into metaphyſics? Alas, I cannot ſee in the dark; nature has not furniſhed me with the optics of a cat. Muſt I pore upon mathematics? Alas, I cannot ſee in too much light; I am no eagle. It is very poſſible that two and two make four, but I would not give four farthings to demonſtrate this ever ſo clearly; and if theſe be the profits of life, give me the amuſements of it. The people I behold all around me, it ſeems, know all this and more, and yet I do not know one of them who inſpires me with any ambition of being like him. Surely it was of this place, now Cambridge, but formerly known by the name of Babylon, that the prophet ſpoke when he ſaid, "the wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall dwell there, "and their houſes ſhall be full of doleful creatures, "and owls ſhall build there, and ſatyrs ſhall dance "there; their forts and towers ſhall be a den for ever, "a joy of wild aſſes; there ſhall the great owl make

"her

"her neſt, and lay and hatch and gather under her "ſhadow; it ſhall be a court of dragons; the ſcreech "owl alſo ſhall reſt there, and find for herſelf a place "of reſt." You ſee here is a pretty collection of deſolate animals, which is verified in this town to a tittle, and perhaps it may alſo allude to your habitation, for you know all types may be taken by abundance of handles; however, I defy your owls to match mine.

If the default of your ſpirits and nerves be nothing but the effect of the hyp, I have no more to ſay. We all muſt ſubmit to that wayward Queen; I too in no ſmall degree own her ſway,

I feel her influence while I ſpeak her power.

But if it be a real diſtemper, pray take more care of your health, if not for your own at leaſt for our ſakes, and do not be ſo ſoon weary of this little world: I do not know what * refined friendſhips you may have contracted in the other, but pray do not be in a hurry

NOTE.

* This thought is very juvenile, but perhaps he meant to ridicule the affected manner of Mrs. Rowe's letters of the dead to the living; a book which was, I believe, publiſhed about this time.

to ſee your acquaintance above; among your terreſtrial familiars, however, though I ſay it that ſhould not ſay it, there poſitively is not one that has a greater eſteem for you than Yours moſt ſincerely, &c.

Peterhouſe, Dec. 1736.

LETTER V.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

I Congratulate you on your being about to leave college *, and rejoice much you carry no degrees with you. For I would not have You dignified, and I not, for the world, you would have inſulted me ſo. My eyes, ſuch as they are, like yours, are neither metaphyſical nor mathematical; I have, nevertheleſs, a great reſpect for your connoiſſeurs that way, but am always

NOTE.

* I ſuſpect that Mr. Weſt miſtook his correſpondent; who, in ſaying he did not take degrees, meant only to let his friend know that he ſhould ſoon be releaſed from lectures and diſputations. It is certain that Mr. Gray continued at college near two years after the time he wrote the preceding letter.

always contented to be their humble admirer. Your collection of desolate animals pleased me much; but Oxford, I can assure you, has her owls that match yours, and the prophecy has certainly a squint that way. Well, you are leaving this dismal land of bondage, and which way are you turning your face? Your friends, indeed, may be happy in you, but what will you do with your classic companions? An inn of court is as horrid a place as a college, and a moot case is as dear to gentle dullness as a syllogism. But wherever you go, let me beg you not to throw poetry "like a nauseous weed away:" Cherish its sweets in your bosom, they will serve you now and then to correct the disgusting sober follies of the common law, misce stultitiam consiliis brevem, dulce est desipere in loco; so said Horace to Virgil, those two sons of Anac in poetry, and so say I to you, in this degenerate land of pigmies,

Mix with your grave designs a little pleasure,
Each day of business has its hour of leisure.

In one of these hours I hope, dear Sir, you will sometimes think of me, write to me, and know me yours,

Ἐξαυδα, μὴ κεῦθε νόῳ, ἵνα εἴδομεν ἄμφω·

that is, write freely to me and openly, as I do to you, and to give you a proof of it I have sent you an

elegy

elegy * of Tibullus tranſlated. Tibullus, you muſt know, is my favourite elegiac poet; for his language is more elegant and his thoughts more natural than Ovid's. Ovid excells him only in wit, of which no poet had more in my opinion. The reaſon I chooſe ſo melancholy a kind of poeſie, is becauſe my low ſpirits and conſtant ill health (things in me not imaginary, as you ſurmiſe, but too real, alas! and, I fear, conſtitutional) "have tuned my heart to elegies of woe;" and this likewiſe is the reaſon why I am the moſt irregular thing alive at college, for you may depend upon it I value my health above what they call diſcipline. As for this poor unlicked thing of an elegy, pray criticiſe it unmercifully, for I ſend it with that intent. Indeed your late tranſlation of Statius might have deterred me, but I know you are not more able to excell others, than you are apt to forgive the want of excellence, eſpecially when it is found in the productions of Your moſt ſincere friend.

Chriſt Church, Dec. 22, 1736.

LETTER

NOTE.

* This I omit for the reaſon given in a preceding note, and for another alſo, becauſe it is not written in alternate but heroic rhyme; which I think is not the ſpecies of Engliſh meaſure adapted to elegiac poetry.

LETTER VI. *

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WALPOLE.

YOU can never weary me with the repetition of any thing that makes me ſenſible of your kindneſs; ſince that has been the only idea of any ſocial happineſs that I have almoſt ever received, and which (begging your pardon for thinking ſo differently from you in ſuch caſes) I would by no means have parted with for an exemption from all the uneaſineſſes mixed with it: But it would be unjuſt to imagine my taſte was any

NOTE.

* Mr. Walpole, on my informing him that it was my intention to publiſh the principal part of Mr. Gray's correſpondence with Mr. Weſt, very obligingly communicated to me the letters which he had alſo received from Mr. Gray at the ſame period. From this collection I have ſelected ſuch as I thought would be moſt likely to pleaſe the generality of readers; omitting, though with regret, many of the more ſprightly and humorous ſort, becauſe either from their perſonality, or ſome other local circumſtance, they did not ſeem ſo well adapted to hit the public taſte. I ſhall ſay more upon this ſubject in a ſubſequent ſection, when I give my idea of Mr. Gray's peculiar vein of humour.

any rule for yours; for which reaſon my letters are ſhorter and leſs frequent than they would be, had I any materials but myſelf to entertain you with. Love and brown ſugar muſt be a poor regale for one of your gout, and, alas! you know I am by trade a grocer *. Scandal (if I had any) is a merchandize you do not profeſs dealing in; now and then, indeed, and to oblige a friend, you may perhaps ſlip a little out of your pocket, as a decayed gentlewoman would a piece of right mecklin, or a little quantity of run tea, but this only now and then, not to make a practice of it. Monſters appertaining to this climate you have ſeen already, both wet and dry. So you perceive within how narrow bounds my pen is circumſcribed, and the whole contents of my ſhare in our correſpondence may be reduced under the two heads of 1ſt, You, 2dly, I; the firſt is, indeed, a ſubject to expatiate upon, but you might laugh at me for talking about what I do not underſtand; the ſecond is ſo tiny, ſo tireſome,

NOTE.

* i. e. A man who deals only in coarſe and ordinary wares: to theſe he compares the plain ſincerity of his own friendſhip, undiſguiſed by flattery; which, had he choſen to carry on the alluſion, he might have termed the trade of a Confectioner.

tireſome, that you ſhall hear no more of it than that it is over Yours.

Peterhouſe, Dec. 23, 1736.

LETTER VII.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

I Have been very ill, and am ſtill hardly recovered. Do you remember Elegy 5th, Book the 3d, of Tibullus, Vos tenet, &c. and do you remember a letter of Mr. Pope's, in ſickneſs, to Mr. Steele? This melancholy elegy and this melancholy letter I turned into a more melancholy epiſtle of my own, during my ſickneſs, in the way of imitation; and this I ſend to you and my friends at Cambridge, not to divert them, for it cannot, but merely to ſhew them how ſincere I was when ſick: I hope my ſending it to them now may convince them I am no leſs ſincere, though perhaps more ſimple, when well.

AD AMICOS. *

Yes, happy youths, on Camus' ſedgy ſide,
You feel each joy that friendſhip can divide;

Each

NOTE.

* Almoſt all Tibullus's elegy is imitated in this little piece, from whence his tranſition to Mr. Pope's letter is very artfully contrived, and beſpeaks a degree of judgment much beyond Mr. Weſt's years.

Each realm of ſcience and of art explore,
And with the antient blend the modern lore.
Studious alone to learn whate'er may tend
To raiſe the genius or the heart to mend;
Now pleas'd along the cloiſter'd walk you rove,
And trace the verdant mazes of the grove,
Where ſocial oft, and oft alone, ye chuſe
To catch the zephyr and to court the muſe.
Mean time at me (while all devoid of art
Theſe lines give back the image of my heart)
At me the pow'r that comes or ſoon or late,
Or aims, or ſeems to aim, the dart of fate;
From you remote, methinks, alone I ſtand
Like ſome ſad exile in a deſert land;
Around no friends their lenient care to join
In mutual warmth, and mix their heart with mine.
Or real pains, or thoſe which fancy raiſe,
For ever blot the ſunſhine of my days;
To ſickneſs ſtill, and ſtill to grief a prey,
Health turns from me her roſy face away.

Juſt heav'n! what ſin, ere life begins to bloom,
Devotes my head untimely to the tomb;
Did e'er this hand againſt a brother's life
Drug the dire bowl or point the murd'rous knife?

Did

Did e'er this tongue the ſlanderer's tale proclaim,
Or madly violate my Maker's name?
Did e'er this heart betray a friend or foe,
Or know a thought but all the world might know?
As yet juſt ſtarted from the liſts of time,
My growing years have ſcarcely told their prime;
Uſeleſs, as yet, through life I've idly run,
No pleaſures taſted, and few duties done.
* Ah, who, ere autumn's mellowing ſuns appear,
Would pluck the promiſe of the vernal year;
Or, ere the grapes their purple hue betray,
Tear the crude cluſter from the mourning ſpray.
Stern Power of Fate, whoſe ebon ſceptre rules
The Stygian deſerts and Cimmerian pools,
Forbear, nor raſhly ſmite my youthful heart,
A victim yet unworthy of thy dart;
Ah, ſtay till age ſhall blaſt my withering face,
Shake in my head, and falter in my pace;

Then

NOTE.

* Quid fraudare juvat vitem creſcentibus uvis?
Et modo nata mala vellere poma manu?

So the original. The paraphraſe ſeems to me infinitely more beautiful. There is a peculiar blemiſh in the ſecond line, ariſing from the ſynonimes *mala* and *poma*.

Then aim the ſhaft, then meditate the blow,
* And to the dead my willing ſhade ſhall go.

How weak is Man to Reaſon's judging eye!
Born in this moment, in the next we die;
Part mortal clay, and part ethereal fire,
Too proud to creep, too humble to aſpire.
In vain our plans of happineſs we raiſe,
Pain is our lot, and patience is our praiſe;
Wealth, lineage, honours, conqueſt, or a throne,
Are what the wiſe would fear to call their own.
Health is at beſt a vain precarious thing,
And fair-fac'd youth is ever on the wing;
† 'Tis like the ſtream, beſide whoſe wat'ry bed
Some blooming plant exalts his flow'ry head,

Nurs'd

NOTES.

* Here he quits Tibullus; the ten following verſes have but a remote reference to Mr. Pope's letter.

† "Youth, at the very beſt, is but the betrayer of hu-
"man life in a gentler and ſmoother manner than age; 'tis
"like the ſtream that nouriſhes a plant upon a bank, and
"cauſes it to flouriſh and bloſſom to the ſight, but at the
"ſame time is undermining it at the root in ſecret." *Pope's Works, vol. 7, page 254, 1ſt edit. Warburton.*—Mr. Weſt,

by

Nurs'd by the wave the ſpreading branches riſe,
Shade all the ground and flouriſh to the ſkies;
The waves the while beneath in ſecret flow,
And undermine the hollow bank below;
Wide and more wide the waters urge their way,
Bare all the roots and on their fibres prey.
Too late the plant bewails his fooliſh pride,
And ſinks, untimely, in the whelming tide.

But why repine, does life deſerve my ſigh?
Few will lament my loſs whene'er I die.
* For thoſe the wretches I deſpiſe or hate,
I neither envy nor regard their fate.
For me, whene'er all-conquering Death ſhall ſpread
His wings around my unrepining head,

NOTES.

by prolonging his paraphraſe of this ſimile, gives it additional beauty from that very circumſtance, but he ought to have introduced it by Mr. Pope's own thought, "Youth is "a betrayer;" his couplet preceding the ſimile conveys too general a reflection.

* "I am not at all uneaſy at the thought that many men, "whom I never had any eſteem for, are likely to enjoy this "world after me." *Vide ibid.*

* I care not; tho' this face be ſeen no more,
The world will paſs as cheerful as before;
Bright as before the day-ſtar will appear,
The fields as verdant, and the ſkies as clear;
Nor ſtorms nor comets will my doom declare,
Nor ſigns on earth, nor portents in the air;
Unknown and ſilent will depart my breath,
Nor Nature e'er take notice of my death.
Yet ſome there are (ere ſpent my vital days)
Within whoſe breaſts my tomb I wiſh to raiſe.
Lov'd in my life, lamented in my end,
Their praiſe would crown me as their precepts mend:

To

NOTE.

* "The morning after my exit the ſun will riſe as bright "as ever, the flowers ſmell as ſweet, the plants ſpring as "green;" ſo far Mr. Weſt copies his original, but inſtead of the following part of the ſentence, "People will laugh "as heartily and marry as faſt as they uſed to do," he inſerts a more ſolemn idea,

Nor ſtorms nor comets, &c.

juſtly perceiving that the elegiac turn of his epiſtle would not admit ſo ludicrous a thought, as was in its place in Mr. Pope's familiar letter; ſo that we ſee, young as he was, he had obtained the art of judiciouſly ſelecting, one of the firſt provinces of good taſte.

To them may theſe fond lines my name endear;
Not from the Poet but the Friend ſincere.

Chriſt Church, July 4, 1737.

LETTER VIII.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

AFTER a month's expectation of you, and a fortnight's deſpair, at Cambridge, I am come to town, and to better hopes of ſeeing you. If what you ſent me laſt be the product of your melancholy, what may I not expect from your more cheerful hours? For by this time the ill health that you complain of is (I hope) quite departed; though, if I were ſelf-intereſted, I ought to wiſh for the continuance of any thing that could be the occaſion of ſo much pleaſure to me. Low ſpirits are my true and faithful companions; they get up with me, go to bed with me, make journeys and returns as I do; nay, and pay viſits, and will even affect to be jocoſe, and force a feeble laugh with me; but moſt commonly we ſit alone together, and are the prettieſt inſipid company in the world. However, when you come, I believe they muſt undergo the fate

of

of all humble companions, and be diſcarded. Would I could turn them to the ſame uſe that you have done, and make an Apollo of them. If they could write ſuch verſes with me, not hartſhorn, nor ſpirit of amber, nor all that furniſhes the cloſet of an apothecary's widow, ſhould perſuade me to part with them: But, while I write to you, I hear the bad news of Lady Walpole's death on Saturday night laſt. Forgive me if the thought of what my poor Horace muſt feel on that account, obliges me to have done in reminding you that I am Yours, &c.

London, Aug. 22, 1737.

LETTER IX.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WALPOLE.

I Was hindered in my laſt, and ſo could not give you all the trouble I would have done. The deſcription of a road, which your coach wheels have ſo often honoured, it would be needleſs to give you; ſuffice it that I arrived ſafe * at my Uncle's, who is a great

NOTE.

* At Burnham in Buckinghamſhire.

great hunter in imagination; his dogs take up every chair in the houſe, ſo I am forced to ſtand at this preſent writing; and though the gout forbids him galloping after them in the field, yet he continues ſtill to regale his ears and noſe with their comfortable noiſe and ſtink. He holds me mighty cheap, I perceive, for walking when I ſhould ride, and reading when I ſhould hunt. My comfort amidſt all this is, that I have at the diſtance of half a mile, through a green lane, a foreſt (the vulgar call it a common) all my own, at leaſt as good as ſo, for I ſpy no human thing in it but myſelf. It is a little chaos of mountains and precipices; mountains, it is true, that do not aſcend much above the clouds, nor are the declivities quite ſo amazing as Dover cliff; but juſt ſuch hills as people who love their necks as well as I do may venture to climb, and craggs that give the eye as much pleaſure as if they were more dangerous: Both vale and hill are covered with moſt venerable beeches, and other very reverend vegetables, that, like moſt other ancient people, are always dreaming out their old ſtories to the winds,

And as they bow their hoary tops relate,
In murm'ring ſounds, the dark decrees of fate;
While viſions, as poetic eyes avow,
Cling to each leaf and ſwarm on every bough.

At the foot of one of theſe ſquats me I, (il penſeroſo) and there grow to the trunk for a whole morning. The timorous hare and ſportive ſquirrel gambol around me like Adam in Paradiſe, before he had an Eve; but I think he did not uſe to read Virgil, as I commonly do there. In this ſituation I often converſe with my Horace, aloud too, that is talk to you, but I do not remember that I ever heard you anſwer me. I beg pardon for taking all the converſation to myſelf, but it is entirely your own fault. We have old Mr. Southern at a Gentleman's houſe a little way off, who often comes to ſee us; he is now ſeventy-ſeven years old *, and has almoſt wholly loſt his memory; but is as agreeable as an old man can be, at leaſt I perſuade myſelf ſo when I look at him, and think of Iſabella and Oroonoko. I ſhall be in Town in about three weeks. Adieu.

September, 1737.

LETTER

NOTE.

* He lived nine years longer, and died at the great age of eighty-ſix. Mr. Gray always thought highly of his pathetic powers, at the ſame time that he blamed his ill taſte for mixing them ſo injudiciouſly with farce, in order to produce that monſtrous ſpecies of compoſition called Tragi-comedy.

LETTER X.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WALPOLE. *

I Sympathize with you in the ſufferings which you foreſee are coming upon you. We are both at preſent, I imagine, in no very agreeable ſituation; for my part I am under the misfortune of having nothing to do, but it is a misfortune which, thank my ſtars, I can pretty well bear. You are in a confuſion of wine, and roaring, and hunting, and tobacco, and, heaven be praiſed, you too can pretty well bear it; while our evils are no more I believe we ſhall not much repine. I imagine, however, you will rather chooſe to converſe with the living dead, that adorn the walls of your apartments, than with the dead living that deck the middles of them; and prefer a picture of ſtill life to the realities of a noiſy one, and, as I gueſs, will imitate what you prefer, and for an hour or two at noon will ſtick yourſelf up as formal as if you had been fixed

NOTE.

* At this time with his father at Houghton. Mr. Gray writes from the ſame place he did before, from his Uncle's houſe in Buckinghamſhire.

in your frame for theſe hundred years, with a pink or roſe in one hand, and a great ſeal ring on the other. Your name, I aſſure you, has been propagated in theſe countries by a convert of yours, one * *, he has brought over his whole family to you; they were before pretty good Whigs, but now they are abſolute Walpolians. We have hardly any body in the pariſh but knows exactly the dimenſions of the hall and ſaloon at Houghton, and begin to believe that the * lanthorn is not ſo great a conſumer of the fat of the land as diſaffected perſons have ſaid: For your reputation, we keep to ourſelves your not hunting nor drinking hogan, either of which here would be ſufficient to lay your honour in the duſt. To-morrow ſe'nnight I hope to be in Town, and not long after at Cambridge.

Burnham, Sept. 1737. I am, &c.

LETTER XI.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

REceiving no anſwer to my laſt letter, which I writ above a month ago, I muſt own I am a little uneaſy. The ſlight ſhadow of you which I had in

NOTE.

* A favourite object of Tory ſatire at the time.

in Town, has only ſerved to endear you to me the more. The moments I paſt with you made a ſtrong impreſſion upon me. I ſingled you out for a friend, and I would have you know me to be yours, if you deem me worthy.—Alas, Gray, you cannot imagine how miſerably my time paſſes away. My health and nerves and ſpirits are, thank my ſtars, the very worſt, I think, in Oxford. Four-and-twenty hours of pure unalloyed health together, are as unknown to me as the 400,000 characters in the Chineſe vocabulary. One of my complaints has of late been ſo over-civil as to viſit me regularly once a month—jam certus conviva. This is a painful nervous head-ach, which perhaps you have ſometimes heard me ſpeak of before. Give me leave to ſay, I find no phyſic comparable to your letters. If, as it is ſaid in Eccleſiaſticus, "Friendſhip be the phyſic of the mind," preſcribe to me, dear Gray, as often and as much as you think proper, I ſhall be a moſt obedient patient.

Non ego
Fidis iraſcar medicis, offendar amicis.

I venture here to write you down a Greek epigram *, which I lately turned into Latin, and hope you will excuſe it. Perſpicui

NOTE.

* Of Poſidippus. *Vide Anthologia, H. Stephan. p.* 220. Mr. Gray in his MS. notes to this edition of the Anthologia

(of

Perſpicui puerum ludentem in margine rivi
Immerſit vitreæ limpidus error aquæ:
At gelido ut mater moribundum e flumine traxit
Credula, & amplexu funus inane fovet;
Paulatim puer in dilecto pectore, ſomno
Languidus, æternùm lumina compoſuit.

Adieu! I am going to my tutor's lectures on one Puffendorff, a very juriſprudent author as you ſhall read on a ſummer's day. Believe me yours, &c.

Chriſt Church, Dec. 2, 1738.

LETTER XII.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

LITERAS mi Favonî! * abs te demum, nudiuſtertiùs credo, accepi planè mellitas, niſi fortè quà de ægritudine quâdam tuâ dictum: atque hoc ſane mihi

NOTES.

(of which I ſhall give an account in a ſubſequent ſection) inſerts this tranſlation, and adds "Deſcriptio pulcherrima "& quæ tenuem illum græcorum ſpiritum mirificè ſapit;" and in concluſion, "Poſidippus inter principes Anthologiæ "poetas emicat, Ptolemæi Philadelphi ſeculo vixit."

* Mr. Gray in all his latin compoſitions, addreſſed to this Gentleman, calls him Favonîus, in alluſion to the name of Weſt.

mihi habitum eſt non paulò acerbiùs, quod te capitis morbo implicitum eſſe intellexi; oh morbum mihi quam odioſum! qui de induſtria id agit, ut ego in ſingulos menſes, dii boni, quantis jucunditatibus orbarer! quàm ex animo mihi dolendum eſt, quod

Medio de fonte leporum
Surgit amari aliquid.

Salutem mehercule, nolo, tam parvipendas, atq; amicis tam improbè conſulas: quanquam tute fortaſſis—æſtuas anguſto limite mundi, viamq; (ut dicitur) affectas Olympo, nos tamen non eſſe tam ſublimes, utpote qui hiſce in ſordibus & fæce diutius paululum verſari volumus, reminiſcendum eſt: illæ tuæ Muſæ, ſi te ament modo, derelinqui pauliſper non nimis ægrè patientur: indulge, amabo te, pluſquam ſoles, corporis exercitationibus: magis te campus habeat, aprico magis te dedas otio, ut ne id ingenium quod tam cultum curas, diligenter nimis dum foves, officioſarum matrum ritu, interimas. Vide quæſo, quam ἰατρικῶς tecum agimus,

ἦδ' ἐπίθήσω
Φάρμαχ' ἃ κεν πάυσησι μελαίνεάων ὀδυνάων.

ſi de his pharmacis non ſatis liquet; ſunt feſtivitates meræ, ſunt facetiæ & riſus; quos ego equidem ſi adhibere nequeo, tamen ad præcipiendum (ut medicorum fere

fere mos eſt) certè ſatis ſim; id, quod poeticé ſub finem epiſtolæ luſiſti, mihi gratiſſimum quidem accidit; admodum latinè coctum & conditum tetraſticon, græcam tamen illam ἀφελείαν mirificè ſapit: tu quod reſtat, vide, ſodes, hujuſce hominis ignorantiam; cum, unde hoc tibi ſit depromptum, (ut fatear) prorſus neſcio: ſane ego equidem nihil in capſis reperio quo tibi minimæ partis ſolutio fiat. Vale, & me ut ſoles, ama.

A. D. 11 *Kalend. Februar.*

LETTER XIII. *

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

I Ought to anſwer you in Latin, but I feel I dare not enter the liſts with you—cupidum, pater optime, vires deficiunt. Seriouſly you write in that language with a grace and an Auguſtan urbanity that amazes me: Your Greek too is perfect in its kind. And here let

NOTE.

* This was written in French, but as I doubted whether it would ſtand the teſt of polite criticiſm ſo well as the preceding would of learned, I choſe to tranſlate ſo much of it as I thought neceſſary in order to preſerve the chain of correſpondence.

let me wonder that a man, longè græcorum doctiſſimus, ſhould be at a loſs for the verſe and chapter whence my epigram is taken. I am ſorry I have not my Aldus with me that I might ſatisfy your curioſity; but he with all my other literary folks are left at Oxford, and therefore you muſt ſtill reſt in ſuſpence. I thank you again and again for your medical preſcription. I know very well that thoſe "riſus, feſtivitates & facetiæ" would contribute greatly to my cure, but then you muſt be my apothecary as well as phyſician, and make up the doſe as well as direct it; ſend me, therefore, an electuary of theſe drugs, made up ſecundùm artem, "et eris mihi magnus Apollo," in both his capacities as a god of poets and god of phyſicians. Wiſh me joy of leaving my college, and leave yours as faſt as you can. I ſhall be ſettled at the Temple very ſoon.

Dartmouth-ſtreet, Feb. 21, 1737-8.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

* BARBARAS ædes aditure mecum
Quas Eris ſemper fovet inquieta,
Lis ubi latè ſonat, et togatum
Æſtuat agmen!

Dulcius quanto, patulis ſub ulmi
Hoſpitæ ramis temerè jacentem
Sic libris horas, tenuiq; inertes
Fallere Muſâ?

Sæpe enim curis vagor expeditâ
Mente; dum, blandam meditans Camænam,
Vix malo rori, meminive ſeræ
Cedere nocti;

Et,

NOTE.

* I chooſe to call this delicate Sapphic Ode the firſt original production of Mr. Gray's Muſe; for verſes impoſed either by ſchoolmaſters or tutors ought not, I think, to be taken into the conſideration. There is ſeldom a verſe that flows well from the pen of a real Poet if it does not flow voluntarily.

Et, pedes quò me rapiunt, in omni
Colle Parnaſſum videor videre
Fertilem ſylvæ, gelidamq; in omni
Fonte Aganippen.

Riſit & Ver me, facileſq; Nymphæ
Nare captantem, nec ineleganti,
Manè quicquid de violis eundo
Surripit aura:

Me reclinatum teneram per herbam;
Quà leves curſus aqua cunque ducit,
Et moras dulci ſtrepitu lapillo
Nectit in omni.

Hæ novo noſtrum ferè pectus anno
Simplices curæ tenuere, cœlum
Quamdiù ſudum explicuit Favonî
Purior hora:

Otia et campos nec adhuc relinquo,
Nec magis Phœbo Clytie fidelis;
(Ingruant venti licet, et ſeneſcat
Mollior æſtas.)

Namque,

Namque, ſeu, lœtos hominum labores
Prataq; & montes recreante curru,
Purpurâ tractus oriens Eoos
Veſtit, et auro;

Sedulus ſervo veneratus orbem
Prodigum ſplendoris: amæniori
Sive dilectam meditatur igne
Pingere Calpen;

Uſque dum, fulgore magìs magìs jam
Languido circum, variata nubes
Labitur furtim, viridiſq; in umbras
Scena receſſit.

O ego felix, vice ſi (nec unquam
Surgerem rurſus) ſimili cadentem
Parca me lenis ſineret quieto
Fallere Letho!

Multà flagranti radiiſq; cincto
Integris ah! quam nihil inviderem,
Cum Dei ardentes medius quadrigas
Sentit Olympus?

Ohe!

Ohe! amicule noſter, et unde, ſodes tu μεσοπάταξ? adeò repente evaſiſti? jam te rogitaturum credo. Neſcio hercle, ſic planè habet. Quicquid enim nugarum ἐπὶ σχολῆς inter ambulandum in palimpſeſto ſcriptitavi, hiſce te maxumè impertiri viſum eſt, quippe quem probare, quod meum eſt, aut certè ignoſcere ſolitum probè novi: bonâ tuâ veniâ ſit ſi fortè videar in fine ſubtriſtior; nam riſui jamdudum ſalutem dixi; etiam paulò mœſtitiæ ſtudioſiorem factum ſcias, promptumque, Καινοῖς παλαιὰ δακρύοις ϛένειν κακά.

O lachrymarum fons, tenero ſacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo; quater
Felix! in imo qui ſcatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, ſenſit.

Sed de me ſatis. Cura ut valeas.

Jun. 1738.

LETTER XV.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

I Return you a thouſand thanks for your elegant ode, and wiſh you every joy you wiſh yourſelf in it. But, take my word for it, you will never ſpend ſo agreeable a day here as you deſcribe; alas! the ſun with

us

us only riſes to ſhew us the way to Weſtminſter-Hall. Nor muſt I forget thanking you for your little Alcaic fragment. The optic Naiads are infinitely obliged to you.

I was laſt week at Richmond Lodge, with Mr. Walpole, for two days, and dined with * Cardinal Fleury; as far as my ſhort ſight can go, the character of his great art and penetration is very juſt, he is indeed Nulli penetrabilis aſtro.
I go to-morrow to Epſom, where I ſhall be for about a month. Excuſe me, I am in haſte †, but believe me always, &c.

Auguſt 29, 1738.

LETTER

NOTES.

* ir Robert Walpole.

† Mr. Weſt ſeems to have been, indeed, in haſte when he writ this letter; elſe, ſurely, his fine taſte would have led him to have been more profuſe in his praiſe of the Alcaic fragment. He might (I think) have ſaid, without paying too extravagant a compliment to Mr. Gray's genius, that no poet of the Auguſtan age ever produced four more perfect lines, or what would ſooner impoſe upon the beſt critic, as being a genuine antient compoſition.

LETTER XVI.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WALPOLE.

MY dear Sir, I ſhould ſay * Mr. Inſpector General of the Exports and Imports; but that appellation would make but an odd figure in conjunction with the three familiar monoſyllables above written, for

Non benè conveniunt nec in unâ ſede morantur
Majeſtas & amor.

Which is, being interpreted, Love does not live at the Cuſtom-houſe; however, by what ſtyle, title, or denomination ſoever you chooſe to be dignified or diſtinguiſhed hereafter, theſe three words will ſtick by you like a burr, and you can no more get quit of theſe and your chriſtian name than St. Anthony could of his pig. My motions at preſent (which you are pleaſed to aſk after) are much like thoſe of a pendulum or († Dr. Longically ſpeaking) oſcillatory. I ſwing from Chapel or

NOTES.

* Mr. Walpole was juſt named to that poſt, which he exchanged ſoon after for that of Uſher of the Exchequer.

† Dr. Long, the maſter of Pembroke Hall, at this time read lectures in experimental philoſophy.

or Hall home, and from home to Chapel or Hall. All the ſtrange incidents that happen in my journies and returns I ſhall be ſure to acquaint you with; the moſt wonderful is, that it now rains exceedingly, this has refreſhed the * proſpect, as the way for the moſt part lies between green fields on either hand, terminated with buildings at ſome diſtance, caſtles, I preſume, and of great antiquity. The roads are very good, being, as I ſuſpect, the works of Julius Cæſar's army, for they ſtill preſerve, in many places, the appearance of a pavement in pretty good repair, and, if they were not ſo near home, might perhaps be as much admired as the Via Appia; there are at preſent ſeveral rivulets to be croſſed, and which ſerve to enliven the view all around. The country is exceeding fruitful in ravens and ſuch black cattle; but, not to tire you with my travels, I abruptly conclude

Yours, &c.

Auguſt 1738.

LETTER

NOTE.

* All that follows is a humorouſly-hyperbolic deſcription of the quadrangle of Peter-Houſe.

LETTER XVII.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

I Am coming away all ſo faſt, and leaving behind me, without the leaſt remorſe, all the beauties of Sturbridge Fair. Its white bears may roar, its apes may wring their hands, and crocodiles cry their eyes out, all's one for that; I ſhall not once viſit them, nor ſo much as take my leave. The univerſity has publiſhed a ſevere edict againſt ſchiſmatical congregations, and created half a dozen new little procterlings to ſee its orders executed, being under mighty apprehenſions leſt * Henley and his gilt tub ſhould come to the Fair and ſeduce their young ones: but their pains are to ſmall purpoſe, for lo, after all, he is not coming.

I am at this inſtant in the very agonies of leaving college, and would not wiſh the worſt of my enemies a worſe ſituation. If you knew the duſt, the old boxes, the bedſteads, and tutors that are about my ears, you would look upon this letter as a great effort of my re-

 ſolution

NOTE.

* Orator Henley.

ſolution and unconcernedneſs in the midſt of evils. I fill up my paper with a looſe ſort of verſion of that ſcene in Paſtor Fido that begins, Care ſelve beati. *

Sept. 1738.

LETTER

NOTE.

* This Latin verſion is extremely elegiac, but as it is only a verſion I do not inſert it. Mr. Gray did not begin to learn Italian till about a year and a half before he tranſlated this ſcene; and I find amongſt his papers an Engliſh tranſlation of part of the 4th Canto of Taſſo's Geruſalemma Liberata, done previouſly to this, which has great merit. In a letter to Mr. Weſt, dated March, 1737, he ſays, "I "learn Italian like any dragon, and in two months am got "through the 16th book of Taſſo, whom I hold in great "admiration: I want you to learn too, that I may know "your opinion of him; nothing can be eaſier than that "language to any one who knows Latin and French al-"ready, and there are few ſo copious and expreſſive." In the ſame letter he tells him, "that his College has ſet him a "verſifying on a public occaſion," (viz. thoſe verſes which "are called Tripos) on the theme of Luna eſt habitabilis." The Poem, I believe, is to be found in the Muſæ Etonenſes. I would further obſerve, on this occaſion, that though Mr. Gray had lately read and tranſlated Statius, yet when he attempted compoſition, his judgment immediately directed him

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

I Thank you again and again for your two laſt moſt agreeable letters. They could not have come more a-propos; I was without any books to divert me, and they ſupplied the want of every thing: I made them my claſſics in the Country, they were my Horace and Tibullus—Non ita loquor aſſentandi cauſâ ut probè noſti ſi me noris, verum quia ſic mea eſt ſententia. I am but juſt come to Town, and, to ſhew you my eſteem of your favours, I venture to ſend you by the penny poſt, to your Father's, what you will find on the next page; I hope it will reach you ſoon after your arrival, your boxes out of the waggon, yourſelf out of the coach, and tutors out of your memory.

Adieu, we ſhall ſee one another, I hope, to-morrow.

NOTE.

him to the beſt model of verſification; accordingly his hexameters are, as far as modern ones can be, after the manner of Virgil: They move in the ſucceſſion of his pauſes, and cloſe with his eliſions.

ELEGIA.

Quod mihi tam gratæ miſiſti dona Camænæ,
Qualia Mænalius Pan Deus ipſe velit,
Amplector te, Graie, & toto corde repoſco,
Oh deſiderium jam nimis uſque meum:
Et mihi rura placent, & me quoq; ſæpe volentem
Duxerunt Dryades per ſua prata Deæ;
Sicubi lympha fugit liquido pede, ſive virentem,
Magna decus nemoris, quercus opacat humum:
Illuc mane novo vagor, illuc veſpere ſero,
Et, noto ut jacui gramine, nota cano.
Nec noſtræ ignorant divinam Amaryllida ſylvæ:
Ah, ſi deſit amor, nil mihi rura placent.
Ille jugis habitat Deus, ille in vallibus imis,
Regnat & in Cœlis, regnat & Oceano;
Ille gregem toroſq; domat; ſæviq; leonem
Seminis; ille feros, ultus Adonin, apros:
Quin & fervet amore nemus, ramoq; ſub omni
Concentu tremulo plurima gaudet avis.
Duræ etiam in ſylvis agitant connubia plantæ,
Dura etiam & fertur ſaxa animaſſe Venus.
Durior & ſaxis, & robore durior ille eſt,
Sincero ſiquis pectore amare vetat:

Non

Non illi in manibus ſanctum deponere pignus,
Non illi arcanum cor aperire velim;
Neſcit amicitias, teneros qui neſcit amores:
Ah! ſi nulla Venus, nil mihi rura placent.
Me licet a patriâ longè in tellure juberent
Externâ poſitum ducere fata dies;
Si vultus modo amatus adeſſet, non ego contra
Plorarem magnos voce querente Deos.
At dulci in gremio curarum oblivia ducens
Nil cuperem præter poſſe placere meæ;
Nec bona fortunæ aſpiciens, neq; munera regum,
Illa intrà optarem brachia cara mori.

Sept. 17, 1738.

Mr. Gray, on his return to Town, continued at his father's houſe in Cornhill till the March following, in which interval Mr. Walpole being diſinclined to enter ſo early into the buſineſs of Parliament, prevailed on Sir Robert Walpole to permit him to go abroad, and on Mr. Gray (as was ſaid before) to be the companion of his travels. Mr. Weſt ſpent the greateſt part of the winter with his mother and ſiſter at Epſom, during which time a letter or two more paſſed between the two friends. But theſe I think it unneceſſary to inſert,

as

as I have already given ſufficient ſpecimens of the bloſſoms of their Genius. The Reader of taſte and candour will, I truſt, conſider them only as ſuch; yet will be led to think that, as the one produced afterwards "fruits worthy of paradiſe," the other would alſo have produced them, had he lived to a more mature age.

END OF THE FIRST SECTION.

SECTION THE SECOND.

AS I allot this Section entirely to that part of Mr. Gray's life, which he ſpent in travelling through France and Italy, my province will be chiefly that of an Editor; and my only care to ſelect, from a large collection of letters written to his parents and to his friend Mr. Weſt, thoſe parts which, I imagine, will be moſt likely either to inform or amuſe the reader. The multiplicity of accounts, publiſhed, both before and after the time when theſe letters were written, of thoſe very places which Mr. Gray deſcribes, will neceſſarily take from them much of their novelty; yet the elegant eaſe of his epiſtolary ſtyle has a charm in it for all readers of true taſte, that will make every apology of this ſort needleſs. They will perceive, that as theſe letters were written without even the moſt diſtant view of publication, they are eſſentially different in their manner of deſcription from any others that have either preceded or followed them; add to this, that they are interſperſed occaſionally with ſome exquiſitely finiſhed pieces of Latin poetry, which

which he compoſed on the ſpot for the entertainment of his friend. But not to anticipate any part of the reader's pleaſure, I ſhall only further ſay, to forewarn him of a diſappointment, that this correſpondence is defective towards the end, and includes no deſcription either of Venice or its territory; the laſt places which Mr. Gray viſited. This defect was occaſioned by an unfortunate diſagreement between him and Mr. Walpole, ariſing from the difference of their tempers. The former being, from his earlieſt years, curious, penſive, and philoſophical; the latter gay, lively, and, conſequently, inconſiderate: * this therefore occaſioned their ſeparation at Reggio. Mr. Gray went before him to Venice; and ſtaying there only till he could find means of returning to England, he made the

NOTE.

* In juſtice to the memory of ſo reſpectable a friend, Mr. Walpole enjoins me to charge himſelf with the chief blame in their quarrel; confeſſing that more attention and complaiſance, more deference to a warm friendſhip, ſuperior judgment and prudence, might have prevented a rupture that gave much uneaſineſs to them both, and a laſting concern to the ſurvivor; though in the year 1744 a reconciliation was effected between them, by a Lady who wiſhed well to both parties.

the beſt of his way home, repaſſing the Alps, and following almoſt the ſame route through France by which he had before gone to Italy.

LETTER I.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Amiens, April 1, *N. S.* 1739.

AS we made but a very ſhort journey to-day, and came to our inn early, I ſit down to give you ſome account of our expedition. On the 29th (according to the ſtyle here) we left Dover at twelve at noon, and with a pretty briſk gale, which pleaſed every body mighty well, except myſelf, who was extremely ſick the whole time; we reached Calais by five: The weather changed, and it began to ſnow hard the minute we got into the harbour, where we took the boat, and ſoon landed. Calais is an exceeding old, but very pretty town, and we hardly ſaw any thing there that was not ſo new and ſo different from England, that it ſurprized us agreeably. We went the next morning to the great Church, and were at high Maſs (it being Eaſter Monday). We ſaw alſo the Convents of the Capuchins, and

and the Nuns of St. Dominic; with theſe laſt we held much converſation, eſpecially with an Engliſh Nun, a Mrs. Davis, of whoſe work I ſent you, by the return of the Pacquet, a letter-caſe to remember her by. In the afternoon we took a Poſt-chaiſe (it ſtill ſnowing very hard) for Boulogne, which was only eighteen miles further. This chaiſe is a ſtrange ſort of conveyance, of much greater uſe than beauty, reſembling an ill-ſhaped chariot, only with the door opening before inſtead of the ſide; three horſes draw it, one between the ſhafts, and the other two on each ſide, on one of which the poſtillion rides, and drives too *: This vehicle will, upon occaſion, go fourſcore miles a-day, but Mr. Walpole, being in no hurry, chooſes to make eaſy journies of it, and they are eaſy ones indeed; for the motion is much like that of a ſedan, we go about ſix miles an hour, and commonly change horſes at the end of it: It is true they are no very graceful ſteeds, but they go well, and through roads which they ſay are bad for France, but to me they ſeem gravel walks and bowling-greens; in ſhort it would be the fineſt travelling in the world, were it not for the inns, which are moſtly

NOTE.

* This was before the introduction of Poſt-chaiſes here, elſe it would not have appeared a circumſtance worthy notice.

moſtly terrible places indeed. But to deſcribe our progreſs ſomewhat more regularly, we came into Boulogne when it was almoſt dark, and went out pretty early on Tueſday morning; ſo that all I can ſay about it is, that it is a large, old, fortified town, with more Engliſh in it than French. On Tueſday we were to go to Abbéville, ſeventeen leagues, or fifty-one ſhort Engliſh miles; but by the way we dined at Montreuil, much to our hearts' content, on ſtinking mutton cutlets, addled eggs, and ditch water. Madame the hoſteſs made her appearance in long lappets of bone lace and a ſack of linſey-woolſey. We ſupped and lodged pretty well at Abbéville, and had time to ſee a little of it before we came out this morning. There are ſeventeen convents in it, out of which we ſaw the chapels of the Minims and the Carmelite Nuns. We are now come further thirty miles to Amiens, the chief city of the province of Picardy. We have ſeen the cathedral, which is juſt what that of Canterbury muſt have been before the reformation. It is about the ſame ſize, a huge Gothic building, beſet on the outſide with thouſands of ſmall ſtatues, and within adorned with beautiful painted windows, and a vaſt number of chapels dreſſed out in all their finery of altar-pieces, embroidery, gilding, and marble. Over the high altar are

preſerved,

preſerved, in a very large wrought ſhrine of maſſy gold, the relicks of St. Firmin, their patron ſaint. We went alſo to the chapels of the Jeſuits and Urſuline Nuns, the latter of which is very richly adorned. To-morrow we ſhall lie at Clermont, and next day reach Paris. The country we have paſſed through hitherto has been flat, open, but agreeably diverſified with villages, fields well-cultivated, and little rivers. On every hillock is a wind-mill, a crucifix, or a Virgin Mary dreſſed in Flowers, and a ſarcenet robe; one ſees not many people or carriages on the road; now and then indeed you meet a ſtrolling friar, a countryman with his great muff, or a woman riding aſtride on a little aſs, with ſhort petticoats, and a great head-dreſs of blue wool. * * *

LETTER II.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Paris, April 12, 1739.

ENFIN donc me voici à Paris. Mr. Walpole is gone out to ſupper at Lord Conway's, and here I remain alone, though invited too. Do not think I make

make a merit of writing to you preferably to a good ſupper; for theſe three days we have been here, have actually given me an averſion to eating in general. If hunger be the beſt ſauce to meat, the French are certainly the worſt cooks in the world; for what tables we have ſeen have been ſo delicately ſerved, and ſo profuſely, that, after riſing from one of them, one imagines it impoſſible ever to eat again. And now, if I tell you all I have in my head, you will believe me mad, mais n'importe, courage, allons! for if I wait till my head grow clear and ſettle a little, you may ſtay long enough for a letter. Six days have we been coming hither, which other people do in two; they have not been diſagreeable ones; through a fine, open country, admirable roads, and in an eaſy conveyance; the inns not abſolutely intolerable, and images quite unuſual preſenting themſelves on all hands. At Amiens we ſaw the fine cathedral, and eat paté de perdrix; paſſed through the park of Chantilly by the Duke of Bourbon's palace, which we only beheld as we paſſed; broke down at Luſarche; ſtopt at St. Denis, ſaw all the beautiful monuments of the Kings of France, and the vaſt treaſures of the abbey, rubies, and emeralds as big as ſmall eggs, crucifixes, and vows, crowns and reliquaries, of ineſtimable value; but of all their curi-

oſities

oſities the thing the moſt to our taſtes, and which they indeed do the juſtice to eſteem the glory of their collection, was a vaſe of an entire onyx, meaſuring at leaſt five inches over, three deep, and of great thickneſs. It is at leaſt two thouſand years old, the beauty of the ſtone and ſculpture upon it (repreſenting the myſteries of Bacchus) beyond expreſſion admirable; we have dreamed of it ever ſince. The jolly old Benedictine, that ſhowed us the treaſures, had in his youth been ten years a ſoldier; he laughed at all the relicks, was very full of ſtories, and mighty obliging. On Saturday Evening we got to Paris, and were driving through the ſtreets a long while before we knew where we were. The minute we came, voila Milors Holderneſſe, Conway, and his brother; all ſtayed ſupper, and till two o'clock in the morning, for here nobody ever ſleeps; it is not the way: Next day go to dine at my Lord Holderneſſe's, there was the Abbé Prevôt, author of the Cleveland, and ſeveral other pieces much eſteemed: The reſt were Engliſh. At night we went to the Pandore; a ſpectácle literally, for it is nothing but a beautiful piece of machinery of three ſcenes. The firſt repreſents the chaos, and by degrees the ſeparation of the elements. The ſecond, the temple of Jupiter, and the giving of the box to Pandora. The third, the

opening

opening of the box, and all the miſchiefs that enſued. An abſurd deſign, but executed in the higheſt perfection, and that in one of the fineſt theatres in the world; it is the grande ſale des machines in the Palais des Tuileries. Next day dined at Lord Waldegrave's; then to the opera. Imagine to yourſelf for the drama four acts * entirely unconnected with each other, each founded on ſome little hiſtory, ſkilfully taken out of an ancient author, e. g. Ovid's Metamorphoſes, &c. and with great addreſs converted into a French piece of gallantry. For inſtance, that which I ſaw, called the Ballet de la Paix, had its firſt act built upon the ſtory of Nireus. Homer having ſaid he was the handſomeſt man of his time, the poet, imagining ſuch a one could not want a miſtreſs, has given him one. Theſe two come in and ſing ſentiment in lamentable ſtrains, neither air nor recitative; only, to one's great joy, they are every now and then interrupted by a dance, or (to one's great ſorrow) by a chorus that borders the ſtage from one end to the other, and ſcreams, paſt all power of

NOTE.

* The French opera has only three acts, but often a prologue on a different ſubject, which (as Mr. Walpole informs me, who ſaw it at the ſame time) was the caſe in this very repreſentation.

of ſimile to repreſent. The ſecond act was Baucis and Philemon. Baucis is a beautiful young ſhepherdeſs, and Philemon her ſwain. Jupiter falls in love with her, but nothing will prevail upon her; ſo it is all mighty well, and the chorus ſing and dance the praiſes of Conſtancy. The two other acts were about Iphis and Ianthe, and the judgment of Paris. Imagine, I ſay, all this tranſacted by cracked voices, trilling diviſions upon two notes and a half, accompanied by an orcheſtra of humſtrums, and a whole houſe more attentive than if Farinelli ſung, and you will almoſt have formed a juſt notion of the thing *. Our aſtoniſhment at their abſurdity you can never conceive; we had enough to do to expreſs it by ſcreaming an hour louder than the whole dramatis perſonæ. We have alſo ſeen twice the Comedie Françoiſe; firſt, the Mahomet Second, a tragedy that has had a great run of late; and the

NOTE.

* Our author's ſentiments here ſeem to correſpond entirely with thoſe which J. J. Rouſſeau afterwards publiſhed in his famous Lettre ſur la Muſique Françoiſe. In a French letter alſo, which Mr. Gray writ to his friend ſoon after this, he calls their muſic "des miaulemens & des heurlemens "effroyables, melés avec un tintamarre du diable: voilá la "muſique Françoiſe en abregé."

the thing itſelf does not want its beauties, but the actors are beyond meaſure delightful. Mademoiſelle Gauſſin (M. Voltaire's Zara) has with a charming (though little) perſon the moſt pathetic tone of voice, the fineſt expreſſion in her face, and moſt proper action imaginable. There is alſo a Dufrêne, who did the chief character, a handſome man and a prodigious fine actor. The ſecond we ſaw was the Philoſophe marié, and here they performed as well in comedy; there is a Mademoiſelle Quinault, ſomewhat in Mrs. Clive's way, and a Monſieur Grandval, in the nature of Wilks, who is the genteeleſt thing in the world. There are ſeveral more would be much admired in England, and many (whom we have not ſeen) much celebrated here. Great part of our time is ſpent in ſeeing churches and palaces full of fine pictures, &c. the quarter of which is not yet exhauſted. For my part, I could entertain myſelf this month merely with the common ſtreets and the people in them. * * *

LETTER III.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Paris, May 22, 1739.

AFTER the little particulars aforeſaid I ſhould have proceeded to a journal of our tranſactions for this week paſt, ſhould have carried you poſt from hence to Verſailles, hurried you through the gardens to Trianon, back again to Paris, ſo away to Chantilly. But the fatigue is perhaps more than you can bear, and moreover I think I have reaſon to ſtomach your laſt piece of gravity. Suppoſing you were in your ſobereſt mood, I am ſorry you ſhould think me capable of ever being ſo diſſipé, ſo evaporé, as not to be in a condition of reliſhing any thing you could ſay to me. And now, if you have a mind to make your peace with me, arouſe ye from your megrims and your melancholies, and (for exerciſe is good for you) throw away your night-cap, call for your jack-boots, and ſet out with me, laſt Saturday evening, for Verſailles—and ſo at eight o'clock, paſſing through a road ſpeckled with vines, and villas, and hares, and partridges, we arrive at the great avenue, flanked on either hand with a double row of trees

about

about half a mile long, and with the palace itſelf to terminate the view; facing which, on each ſide of you is placed a ſemi-circle of very handſome buildings, which form the ſtables. Theſe we will not enter into, becauſe you know we are no jockies. Well! and is this the great front of Verſailles? What a huge heap of littleneſs! it is compoſed, as it were, of three courts, all open to the eye at once, and gradually diminiſhing till you come to the royal apartments, which on this ſide preſent but half a dozen windows and a balcony. This laſt is all that can be called a front, for the reſt is only great wings. The hue of all this maſs is black, dirty red, and yellow; the firſt proceeding from ſtone changed by age; the ſecond, from a mixture of brick; and the laſt, from a profuſion of tarniſhed gilding. You cannot ſee a more diſagreeable tout-enſemble; and, to finiſh the matter, it is all ſtuck over in many places with ſmall buſts of a tawny hue between every two windows. We paſs through this to go into the garden, and here the caſe is indeed altered; nothing can be vaſter and more magnificent than the back front; before it a very ſpacious terrace ſpreads itſelf, adorned with two large baſons; theſe are bordered and lined (as moſt of the others) with white marble, with handſome ſtatues of bronze reclined on their edges. From hence

you deſcend a huge flight of ſteps into a ſemi-circle formed by woods, that are cut all round into niches, which are filled with beautiful copies of all the famous antique ſtatues in white marble. Juſt in the midſt is the baſon of Latona; ſhe and her children are ſtanding on the top of a rock in the middle, on the ſides of which are the peaſants, ſome half, ſome totally changed into frogs, all which throw out water at her in great plenty. From this place runs on the great alley, which brings you into a complete round, where is the baſon of Apollo, the biggeſt in the gardens. He is riſing in his car out of the water, ſurrounded by nymphs and tritons, all in bronze, and finely executed, and theſe, as they play, raiſe a perfect ſtorm about him; beyond this is the great canal, a prodigious long piece of water, that terminates the whole: All this you have at one coup d'oeil in entering the garden, which is truly great. I cannot ſay as much of the general taſte of the place; every thing you behold ſavours too much of art; all is forced, all is conſtrained about you; ſtatues and vaſes ſowed every where without diſtinction; ſugar-loaves and minced-pies of yew; ſcrawl-work of box, and little ſquirting jets-d'eau, beſides a great ſameneſs in the walks, cannot help ſtriking one at firſt ſight, not to mention the ſilleſt of labyrinths, and all Æſop's

fables

fables in water; ſince theſe were deſigned in uſum Delphini only. Here then we walk by moonlight, and hear the ladies and the nightingales ſing. Next morning, being Whitſunday, make ready to go to the Inſtallation of nine Knights du Saint Eſprit, Cambis is one *: high maſs celebrated with muſic, great croud, much incenſe, King, Queen, Dauphin, Meſdames, Cardinals, and Court: Knights arrayed by his majeſty; reverences before the altar, not bows, but curtſies; ſtiff hams; much tittering among the ladies; trumpets, kettle-drums and fifes. My dear Weſt, I am vaſtly delighted with Trianon, all of us with Chantilly; if you would know why, you muſt have patience, for I can hold my pen no longer, except to tell you that I ſaw Britannicus laſt night; all the Characters, particularly Agrippina and Nero, done to perfection; tomorrow Phædra and Hippolitus. We are making you a little bundle of petites pieces; there is nothing in them, but they are acting at preſent; there are too Crebillon's Letters, and Amuſemens ſur le langage des Bêtes, ſaid to be of one Bougeant, a Jeſuit; they are both eſteemed, and lately come out. This day ſe'nnight we go to Rheims.

LETTER

NOTE.

*The Comte de Cambis was lately returned from his embaſſy in England.

LETTER IV.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Rheims, June 21, *N. S.* 1739.

WE have now been ſettled almoſt three weeks in this city, which is more conſiderable upon account of its ſize and antiquity, than from the number of its inhabitants, or any advantages of commerce. There is little in it worth a ſtranger's curioſity, beſides the cathedral church, which is a vaſt Gothick building of a ſurprizing beauty and lightneſs, all covered over with a profuſion of little ſtatues, and other ornaments. It is here the Kings of France are crowned by the Archbiſhop of Rheims, who is the firſt Peer, and the Primate of the kingdom: The holy veſſel made uſe of on that occaſion, which contains the oil, is kept in the church of St. Nicaſius hard by, and is believed to have been brought by an angel from heaven at the coronation of Clovis, the firſt chriſtian king. The ſtreets in general have but a melancholy aſpect, the houſes all old; the public walks run along the ſide of a great moat under the ramparts, where one hears a continual croaking of frogs; the country round about is one great plain

covered

covered with vines, which at this time of the year afford no very pleaſing proſpect, as being not above a foot high. What pleaſures the place denies to the ſight, it makes up to the palate; ſince you have nothing to drink but the beſt champaigne in the world, and all ſort of proviſions equally good. As to other pleaſures, there is not that freedom of converſation among the people of faſhion here, that one ſees in other parts of France; for though they are not very numerous in this place, and conſequently muſt live a good deal together, yet they never come to any great familiarity with one another. As my Lord Conway had ſpent a good part of his time among them, his brother, and we with him, were ſoon introduced into all their aſſemblies: As ſoon as you enter, the lady of the houſe preſents each of you a card, and offers you a party at quadrille; you ſit down, and play forty deals without intermiſſion, excepting one quarter of an hour, when every body riſes to eat of what they call the gouter, which ſupplies the place of our tea, and is a ſervice of wine, fruits, cream, ſweetmeats, crawfiſh, and cheeſe. People take what they like, and ſit down again to play; after that, they make little parties to go to the walks together, and then all the company retire to their ſeparate habitations. Very ſeldom any ſuppers or dinners are given; and this is

the

the manner they live among one another; not ſo much out of any averſion they have to pleaſure, as out of a ſort of formality they have contracted by not being much frequented by people who have lived at Paris. It is ſure they do not hate gaiety any more than the reſt of their country-people, and can enter into diverſions, that are once propoſed, with a good grace enough; for inſtance, the other evening we happened to be got together in a company of eighteen people, men and women of the beſt faſhion here, at a garden in the town to walk; when one of the ladies bethought herſelf of aſking, Why ſhould not we ſup here? Immediately the cloth was laid by the ſide of a fountain under the trees, and a very elegant ſupper ſerved up; after which another ſaid, Come, let us ſing; and directly began herſelf: From ſinging we inſenſibly fell to dancing, and ſinging in a round; when ſomebody mentioned the violins, and immediately a company of them was ordered: Minuets were begun in the open air, and then came country-dances, which held till four o'clock next morning; at which hour the gayeſt lady there propoſed, that ſuch as were weary ſhould get into their coaches, and the reſt of them ſhould dance before them with the muſic in the van; and in this manner we paraded through all the principal ſtreets of the city, and waked

every

every body in it. Mr. Walpole had a mind to make a cuſtom of the thing, and would have given a ball in the ſame manner next week, but the women did not come into it; ſo I believe it will drop, and they will return to their dull cards, and uſual formalities. We are not to ſtay above a month longer here, and ſhall then go to Dijon, the chief city of Burgundy, a very ſplendid and a very gay town; at leaſt ſuch is the preſent deſign.

LETTER V.

Mr. GRAY to his FATHER.

Dijon, Friday, Sept. 11, *N. S.* 1739.

WE have made three ſhort days journey of it from Rheims hither, where we arrived the night before laſt: The road we have paſſed through has been extremely agreeable: it runs through the moſt fertile part of Champaigne by the ſide of the river Marne, with a chain of hills on each hand at ſome diſtance, entirely covered with woods and vineyards, and every now and then the ruins of ſome old caſtle on their tops; we lay at St. Dizier the firſt night, and at Langres the ſecond, and got hither the next evening time enough to have

have a full view of this city in entering it: It lies in a very extenſive plain covered with vines and corn, and conſequently is plentifully ſupplied with both. I need not tell you that it is the chief city of Burgundy, nor that it is of great antiquity; conſidering which one ſhould imagine it ought to be larger than one finds it. However, what it wants in extent, is made up in beauty and cleanlineſs, and in rich convents and churches, moſt of which we have ſeen. The palace of the States is a magnificent new building, where the Duke of Bourbon is lodged when he comes every three years to hold that Aſſembly, as governour of the Province. A quarter of a mile out of the town is a famous Abbey of Carthuſians, which we are juſt returned from ſeeing. In their chapel are the tombs of the ancient Dukes of Burgundy, that were ſo powerful, till at the death of Charles the Bold, the laſt of them, this part of his dominions was united by Lewis XI. to the crown of France. To-morrow we are to pay a viſit to the Abbot of the Ciſtercians, who lives a few leagues off, and who uſes to receive all ſtrangers with great civility; his Abbey is one of the richeſt in the kingdom; he keeps open houſe always, and lives with great magnificence. We have ſeen enough of this town already, to make us regret the time we ſpent at Rheims; it is full

of

of people of condition, who ſeem to form a much more agreeable ſociety than we found in Champaigne; but as we ſhall ſtay here but two or three days longer, it is not worth while to be introduced into their houſes. On Monday or Tueſday we are to ſet out for Lyons, which is two days journey diſtant, and from thence you ſhall hear again from me.

LETTER VI.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Lyons, Sept. 18, *N. S.* 1739.

SCavez vous bien, mon cher ami, que je vous hais, que je vous deteſte? voila des termes un peu forts; and that will ſave me, upon a juſt computation, a page of paper and ſix drops of ink; which, if I confined myſelf to reproaches of a more moderate nature, I ſhould be obliged to employ in uſing you according to your deſerts. What! to let any body reſide three months at Rheims, and write but once to them? Pleaſe to conſult Tully de Amicit. page 5, line 25, and you will find it ſaid in expreſs terms, "Ad amicum inter Remos relegatum menſe uno quinquies ſcriptum eſto;" nothing

thing more plain, or leſs liable to falſe interpretations. Now becauſe, I ſuppoſe, it will give you pain to know we are in being, I take this opportunity to tell you that we are at the ancient and celebrated Lugdunum, a city ſituated upon the confluence of the Rhône and Saône (Arar, I ſhould ſay) two people, who though of tempers extremely unlike, think fit to join hands here, and make a little party to travel to the Mediterranean in company; the lady comes gliding along through the fruitful plains of Burgundy, incredibili lenitate, ita ut oculis in utram partem fluit judicari non poſſit; the gentleman runs all rough and roaring down from the mountains of Switzerland to meet her; and with all her ſoft airs ſhe likes him never the worſe; ſhe goes through the middle of the city in ſtate, and he paſſes incog. without the walls, but waits for her a little below. The houſes here are ſo high, and the ſtreets ſo narrow, as would be ſufficient to render Lyons the diſmalleſt place in the world, but the number of people, and the face of commerce diffuſed about it, are, at leaſt, as ſufficient to make it the livelieſt: Between theſe two ſufficiencies, you will be in doubt what to think of it; ſo we ſhall leave the city, and proceed to its environs, which are beautiful beyond expreſſion; it is ſurrounded with mountains, and thoſe mountains all bedroped

and

and beſpeckled with houſes, gardens, and plantations of the rich Bourgeois, who have from thence a proſpect of the city in the vale below on one hand, on the other the rich plains of the Lyonnois, with the rivers winding among them, and the Alps, with the mountains of Dauphiné, to bound the view. All yeſterday morning we were buſied in climbing up Mount Fourviere, where the ancient city ſtood perched at ſuch a height, that nothing but the hopes of gain could certainly ever perſuade their neighbours to pay them a viſit: Here are the ruins of the Emperors' palaces, that reſided here, that is to ſay, Auguſtus and Severus; they conſiſt in nothing but great maſſes of old wall, that have only their quality to make them reſpected. In a vineyard of the Minims are remains of a theatre; the Fathers, whom they belong to, hold them in no eſteem at all, and would have ſhowed us their ſacriſty and chapel inſtead of them: The Urſuline Nuns have in their garden ſome Roman baths, but we having the misfortune to be men, and heretics, they did not think proper to admit us. Hard by are eight arches of a moſt magnificent aqueduct, ſaid to be erected by Antony, when his legions were quartered here: There are many other parts of it diſperſed up and down the country, for it brought the water from a river many

leagues

leagues off in La Forez. Here are remains too of Agrippa's ſeven great roads which met at Lyons; in ſome places they lie twelve feet deep in the ground: In ſhort, a thouſand matters that you ſhall not know, till you give me a deſcription of the Païs de Tombridge, and the effect its waters have upon you.

LETTER VII.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

Temple, Sept. 28, 1739.

IF wiſhes could turn to realities, I would fling down my law books, and ſup with you to-night. But, alas, here am I doomed to fix, while you are fluttering from city to city, and enjoying all the pleaſures which a gay climate can afford. It is out of the power of my heart to envy your good fortune, yet I cannot help indulging a few natural deſires; as for example, to take a walk with you on the banks of the Rhône, and to be climbing up mount Fourviere;

Jam mens prætrepidans avet vagari:
Jam læti ſtudio pedes vigeſcunt.

However, ſo long as I am not deprived of your correſpondence,

ſpondence, ſo long ſhall I always find ſome pleaſure in being at home. And, ſetting all vain curioſity aſide, when the fit is over, and my reaſon begins to come to herſelf, I have ſeveral other powerful motives which might eaſily cure me of my reſtleſs inclinations: Amongſt theſe, my Mother's ill ſtate of health is not the leaſt; which was the reaſon of our going to Tunbridge, ſo that you cannot expect much deſcription or amuſement from thence. Nor indeed is there much room for either; for all diverſions there may be reduced to two articles, gaming and going to church. They were pleaſed to publiſh certain Tunbrigiana this ſeaſon; but ſuch ana! I believe there were never ſo many vile little verſes put together before. So much for Tunbridge: London affords me as little to ſay. What! ſo huge a town as London? Yes, conſider only how I live in that town. I never go into the gay world or high world, and conſequently receive nothing from thence to brighten my imagination. The buſy world I leave to the buſy; and am reſolved never to talk politics till I can act at the ſame time. To tell old ſtories, or prate of old books, ſeems a little muſty; and toujours Chapon bouilli, won't do. However,

for

for want of better fare, take another little mouthful of my poetry.

O meæ jucunda comes quietis!
Quæ ferè ægrotum ſolita es levare
Pectus, et ſenſim ah! nimis ingruentes
Fallere curas:
Quid canes? quanto Lyra dic furore
Geſties, quando hâc reducem ſodalem
Glauciam * gaudere ſimul videbis
Méque ſub umbrâ?

LETTER VIII.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Lyons, Oct. 13, *N. S.* 1739.

IT is now almoſt five weeks ſince I left Dijon, one of the gayeſt and moſt agreeable little cities of France, for Lyons, its reverſe in all theſe particulars. It is the ſecond in the kingdom in bigneſs and rank, the ſtreets exceſſively narrow and naſty; the houſes immenſely

NOTE.

* He gives Mr. Gray the name of Glaucias frequently in his Latin verſe, as Mr. Gray calls him Favonius.

immenſely high and large; (that, for inſtance, where we are lodged, has twenty-five rooms on a floor, and that for five ſtories) it ſwarms with inhabitants like Paris itſelf, but chiefly a mercantile people, too much given up to commerce to think of their own, much leſs of a ſtranger's diverſions. We have no acquaintance in the town, but ſuch Engliſh as happen to be paſſing through here, in their way to Italy and the South, which at preſent happen to be near thirty in number. It is a fortnight ſince we ſet out from hence upon a little excurſion to Geneva. We took the longeſt road, which lies through Savoy, on purpoſe to ſee a famous monaſtery, called the grand Chartreuſe, and had no reaſon to think our time loſt. After having travelled ſeven days very ſlow (for we did not change horſes, it being impoſſible for a chaiſe to go poſt in theſe roads) we arrived at a little village, among the mountains of Savoy, called Echelles; from thence we proceeded on horſes, who are uſed to the way, to the mountain of the Chartreuſe: It is ſix miles to the top; the road runs winding up it, commonly not ſix feet broad; on one hand is the rock, with woods of pine-trees hanging over head; on the other, a monſtrous precipice, almoſt perpendicular, at the bottom of which rolls a torrent, that ſometimes tumbling among the

fragments of ſtone that have fallen from on high, and ſometimes precipitating itſelf down vaſt deſcents with a noiſe like thunder, which is ſtill made greater by the echo from the mountains on each ſide, concurs to form one of the moſt ſolemn, the moſt romantic, and the moſt aſtoniſhing ſcenes I ever beheld: Add to this the ſtrange views made by the craggs and cliffs on the other hand; the caſcades that in many places throw themſelves from the very ſummit down into the vale, and the river below; and many other particulars impoſſible to deſcribe; you will conclude we had no occaſion to repent our pains. This place St. Bruno choſe to retire to, and upon its very top founded the aforeſaid Convent, which is the ſuperior of the whole order. When we came there, the two fathers, who are commiſſioned to entertain ſtrangers, (for the reſt muſt neither ſpeak one to another, nor to any one elſe) received us very kindly; and ſet before us a repaſt of dried fiſh, eggs, butter, and fruits, all excellent in their kind, and extremely neat. They preſſed us to ſpend the night there, and to ſtay ſome days with them; but this we could not do, ſo they led us about their houſe, which is, you muſt think, like a little city; for there are 100 fathers, beſides 300 ſervants, that make their clothes, grind their corn, preſs their wine,

and

and do every thing among themſelves: The whole is quite orderly and ſimple; nothing of finery, but the wonderful decency, and the ſtrange ſituation, more than ſupply the place of it. In the evening we deſcended by the ſame way, paſſing through many clouds that were then forming themſelves on the mountain's ſide. Next day we continued our journey by Chamberry, which, though the chief city of the Dutchy, and reſidence of the king of Sardinia, when he comes into this part of his dominions, makes but a very mean and inſignificant appearance; we lay at Aix, once famous for its hot baths, and the next night at Annecy; the day after, by noon, we got to Geneva. I have not time to ſay any thing about it, nor of our ſolitary journey back again. * * *

LETTER IX.

Mr. GRAY to his FATHER.

Lyons, Oct. 25, *N. S.* 1739.

IN my laſt I gave you the particulars of our little journey to Geneva: I have only to add, that we ſtayed about a week, in order to ſee Mr. Conway ſet-

tled there: I do not wonder ſo many Engliſh chooſe it for their reſidence; the city is very ſmall, neat, prettily built, and extremely populous; the Rhône runs through the middle of it, and it is ſurrounded with new fortifications, that give it a military compact air; which, joined to the happy, lively countenances of the inhabitants, and an exact diſcipline always as ſtrictly obſerved as in time of war, makes the little republic appear a match for a much greater power; though perhaps Geneva, and all that belongs to it, are not of equal extent with Windſor and its two parks. To one that has paſſed through Savoy, as we did, nothing can be more ſtriking than the contraſt, as ſoon as he approaches the town. Near the gates of Geneva runs the torrent Arve, which ſeparates it from the King of Sardinia's dominions; on the other ſide of it lies a country naturally, indeed, fine and fertile; but you meet with nothing in it but meager, ragged, bare-footed peaſants, with their children, in extreme miſery and naſtineſs; and even of theſe no great numbers: You no ſooner have croſſed the ſtream I have mentioned, but poverty is no more; not a beggar, hardly a diſcontented face to be ſeen; numerous, and well-dreſſed people ſwarming on the ramparts; drums beating, ſoldiers, well-clothed and armed, exerciſing; and folks, with buſineſs

in

in their looks, hurrying to and fro; all contribute to make any perſon, who is not blind, ſenſible what a difference there is between the two governments, that are the cauſes of one view and the other. The beautiful lake, at one end of which the town is ſituated; its extent; the ſeveral ſtates that border upon it; and all its pleaſures, are too well known for me to mention them. We ſailed upon it as far as the dominions of Geneva extend, that is, about two leagues and a half on each ſide; and landed at ſeveral of the little houſes of pleaſure, that the inhabitants have built all about it, who received us with much politeneſs. The ſame night we eat part of a trout, taken in the lake, that weighed thirty-ſeven pounds; as great a monſter as it appeared to us, it was eſteemed there nothing extraordinary, and they aſſured us, it was not uncommon to catch them of fifty pounds; they are dreſſed here, and ſent poſt to Paris upon ſome great occaſions; nay, even to Madrid, as we were told. The road we returned through was not the ſame we came by: We croſſed the Rhône at Seyſſel, and paſſed for three days among the mountains of Bugey, without meeting with any thing new: At laſt we came out into the plains of La Breſſe, and ſo to Lyons again. Sir Robert has written to Mr. Walpole, to deſire he would go to Italy; which he

has

has reſolved to do; ſo that all the ſcheme of ſpending the winter in the South of France is laid aſide, and we are to paſs it in a much finer country. You may imagine I am not ſorry to have this opportunity of ſeeing the place in the world that beſt deſerves it: Beſides as the Pope (who is eighty-eight, and has been lately at the point of death) cannot probably laſt a great while, perhaps we may have the fortune to be preſent at the election of a new one, when Rome will be in all its glory. Friday next we certainly begin our journey; in two days we ſhall come to the foot of the Alps, and ſix more we ſhall be in paſſing them. Even here the winter is begun; what then muſt it be among thoſe vaſt ſnowy mountains where it is hardly ever ſummer? We are, however, as well armed as poſſible againſt the cold, with muffs, hoods, and maſks of bever, fur-boots, and bear ſkins. When we arrive at Turin, we ſhall reſt after the fatigues of the journey. * * *

LETTER

LETTER X.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Turin, Nov. 7, N. S. 1739.

I AM this night arrived here, and have juſt ſet down to reſt me after eight days tireſome journey: For the three firſt we had the ſame road we before paſſed through to go to Geneva; the fourth we turned out of it, and for that day and the next travelled rather among than upon the Alps; the way commonly running through a deep valley by the ſide of the river Arc, which works itſelf a paſſage, with great difficulty and a mighty noiſe, among vaſt quantities of rocks, that have rolled down from the mountain tops. The winter was ſo far advanced, as in great meaſure to ſpoil the beauty of the proſpect; however, there was ſtill ſomewhat fine remaining amidſt the ſavageneſs and horrour of the place: The ſixth we began to go up ſeveral of theſe mountains; and as we were paſſing one, met with an odd accident enough: Mr. Walpole had a little fat black ſpaniel, that he was very fond of, which he ſometimes uſed to ſet down, and let it run by the chaiſe ſide. We were at that time in a very rough road,

road, not two yards broad at moſt; on one ſide was a great wood of pines, and on the other a vaſt precipice; it was noon-day, and the ſun ſhone bright, when all of a ſudden, from the wood-ſide, (which was as ſteep upwards, as the other part was downwards) out ruſhed a great wolf, came cloſe to the head of the horſes, ſeized the dog by the throat, and ruſhed up the hill again with him in his mouth. This was done in leſs than a quarter of a minute; we all ſaw it, and yet the ſervants had not time to draw their piſtols, or do any thing to ſave the dog *. If he had not been there, and the creature had thought fit to lay hold of one of the horſes; chaiſe, and we, and all muſt inevitably have tumbled above fifty fathoms perpendicular down the precipice. The ſeventh we came to Lanebourg, the laſt town in Savoy; it lies at the foot of the famous mount Cenis, which is ſo ſituated as to allow no room for any way but over the very top of it. Here the chaiſe was forced to be pulled to pieces, and the baggage and that to be carried by mules: We ourſelves were wrapped up in our furs, and ſeated upon a ſort of

NOTE.

* This odd incident might have afforded Mr. Gray a ſubject for an ode, which would have been a good companion to that on the death of a favourite cat.

of matted chair without legs, which is carried upon poles in the manner of a bier, and ſo begun to aſcend by the help of eight men. It was ſix miles to the top, where a plain opens itſelf about as many more in breadth, covered perpetually with very deep ſnow, and in the midſt of that a great lake of unfathomable depth, from whence a river takes its riſe, and tumbles over monſtrous rocks quite down the other ſide of the mountain. The deſcent is ſix miles more, but infinitely more ſteep than the going up; and here the men perfectly fly down with you, ſtepping from ſtone to ſtone with incredible ſwiftneſs in places where none but they could go three paces without falling. The immenſity of the precipices, the roaring of the river and torrents that run into it, the huge craggs covered with ice and ſnow, and the clouds below you and about you, are objects it is impoſſible to conceive without ſeeing them; and though we had heard many ſtrange deſcriptions of the ſcene, none of them at all came up to it. We were but five hours in performing the whole, from which you may judge of the rapidity of the men's motion. We are now got into Piedmont, and ſtopped a little while at La Ferriere, a ſmall village about three quarters of the way down, but ſtill among the clouds, where we began to hear a new language ſpoken round about us;

at

at laſt we got quite down, went through the Pas de Suſe, a narrow road among the Alps, defended by two fortreſſes, and lay at Boſſolens: Next evening through a fine avenue of nine miles in length, as ſtraight as a line, we arrived at this city, which, as you know, is the capital of the Principality, and the reſidence of the King of Sardinia. * * * We ſhall ſtay here, I believe, a fortnight, and proceed for Genoa, which is three or four days journey to go poſt. I am, &c.

LETTER XI.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Turin, Nov. 16, *N. S.* 1739.

AFTER eight days journey through Greenland, we arrived at Turin. You approach it by a handſome avenue of nine miles long, and quite ſtrait. The

NOTE.

* * * That part of the letter here omitted, contained only a deſcription of the city; which, as Mr. Gray has given it to Mr. Weſt in the following letter, and that in a more lively manner, I thought it unneceſſary to inſert: A liberty I have taken in other parts of this correſpondence, in order to avoid repetitions.

The entrance is guarded by certain vigilant dragons, called Douäniers, who mumbled us for ſome time. The city is not large, as being a place of ſtrength, and conſequently confined within its fortifications; it has many beauties and ſome faults; among the firſt are ſtreets all laid out by the line, regular uniform buildings, fine walks that ſurround the whole, and in general a good lively clean appearance: But the houſes are of brick plaiſtered, which is apt to want repairing; the windows of oiled paper, which is apt to be torn; and every thing very ſlight, which is apt to tumble down. There is an excellent Opera, but it is only in the Carnival: Balls every night, but only in the Carnival: Maſquerades too, but only in the Carnival. This Carnival laſts only from Chriſtmas to Lent; one half of the remaining part of the year is paſſed in remembering the laſt, the other in expecting the future Carnival. We cannot well ſubſiſt upon ſuch ſlender diet, no more than upon an execrable Italian Comedy, and a Puppet-Show, called Rappreſentazione d'un' anima dannata, which, I think, are all the preſent diverſions of the place; except the Marquiſe de Cavaillac's Converſazione, where one goes to ſee people play at Ombre and Taroc, a game with 72 cards all painted with ſuns, and moons, and devils and monks. Mr. Walpole has been

been at court; the family are at preſent at a country palace, called La Venerie. The palace here in town is the very quinteſſence of gilding and looking-glaſs; inlaid floors, carved pannels, and painting, wherever they could ſtick a bruſh. I own I have not, as yet, any where met with thoſe grand and ſimple works of Art, that are to amaze one, and whoſe ſight one is to be the better for: But thoſe of Nature have aſtoniſhed me beyond expreſſion. In our little journey up to the Grande Chartreuſe, I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation, that there was no reſtraining: Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain ſcenes that would awe an atheiſt into belief, without the help of other argument. One need not have a very fantaſtic imagination to ſee ſpirits there at noon-day: You have Death perpetually before your eyes, only ſo far removed, as to compoſe the mind without frighting it. I am well perſuaded St. Bruno was a man of no common genius, to chooſe ſuch a ſituation for his retirement; and perhaps ſhould have been a diſciple of his, had I been born in his time. You may believe Abelard and Heloïſe were not forgot upon this occaſion: If I do not miſtake, I ſaw you too every now and then at a diſtance among the trees; il me ſemble, que j'ai vu ce chien de viſage lá quelque

part,

part. You ſeemed to call to me from the other ſide of the precipice, but the noiſe of the river below was ſo great, that I really could not diſtinguiſh what you ſaid; it ſeemed to have a cadence like verſe. In your next you will be ſo good to let me know what it was. The week we have ſince paſſed among the Alps, has not equalled the ſingle day upon that mountain, becauſe the winter was rather too far advanced, and the weather a little foggy. However, it did not want its beauties; the ſavage rudeneſs of the view is inconceivable without ſeeing it: I reckoned, in one day, thirteen caſcades, the leaſt of which was, I dare ſay, one hundred feet in height. I had Livy in the chaiſe with me, and beheld his "Nives cœlo propè immiſtæ, tecta in-"formia impoſita rupibus, pecora jumentaque torrida "frigore, homines intonſi & inculti, animalia inani-"maque omnia rigentia gelu; omnia confragoſa, præ-"ruptaque." The creatures that inhabit them are, in all reſpects, below humanity; and moſt of them, eſpecially women, have the tumidum guttur, which they call goſcia. Mont Cenis, I confeſs, carrries the permiſſion * mountains have of being frightful rather too far;

NOTE.

* A phraſe borrowed from Madame De Sevigné who quotes a *bon mot* on Peliſſon, qu'il abuſoit de la permiſſion qu'ont les hommes d'etre laids.

far; and its horrours were accompanied with too much danger to give one time to reflect upon their beauties. There is a family of the Alpine monſters I have mentioned, upon its very top, that in the middle of winter calmly lay in their ſtock of proviſions and firing, and ſo are buried in their hut for a month or two under the ſnow. When we were down it, and got a little way into Piedmont, we began to find "Apricos quoſ-"dam colles, rivoſque prope ſylvas, & jam humano "cultu digniora loca." I read Silius Italicus too, for the firſt time; and wiſhed for you, according to cuſtom. We ſet out for Genoa in two days time.

LETTER XII.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Genoa, Nov. 21, 1739.

HORRIDOS tractus, Boreæq; linquens
Regna Taurini fera, molliorem
Advehor brumam, Genuæq; amantes
Litora ſoles.

At leaſt if they do not, they have a very ill taſte; for I never beheld any thing more amiable: Only figure to yourſelf

yourſelf a vaſt ſemicircular baſon, full of fine blue ſea, and veſſels of all ſorts and ſizes, ſome ſailing out, ſome coming in, and others at anchor; and all round it palaces and churches peeping over one another's heads, gardens, and marble terraſes full of orange and cypreſs trees, fountains, and trellis-works covered with vines, which all together compoſe the grandeſt of theatres. This is the firſt coup d'oeil, and is almoſt all I am yet able to give you an account of, for we arrived late laſt night. To-day was, luckily, a great feſtival, and in the morning we reſorted to the church of the Madonna delle Vigne, to put up our little oriſons; (I believe I forgot to tell you, that we have been ſometime converts to the holy Catholic church) we found our Lady richly dreſſed out, with a crown of diamonds on her own head, another upon the child's, and a conſtellation of wax lights burning before them: Shortly after came the Doge, in his robes of crimſon damaſk, and a cap of the ſame, followed by the Senate in black. Upon his approach began a fine concert of muſic, and among the reſt two eunuchs' voices, that were a perfect feaſt to ears that had heard nothing but French operas for a year. We liſtened to this, and breathed nothing but incenſe for two hours. The Doge is a very tall, lean, ſtately, old figure, called Coſtantino Balbi; and the

Senate

Senate ſeem to have been made upon the ſame model. They ſaid their prayers, and heard an abſurd white friar preach, with equal devotion. After this we went to the Annonciata, a church built by the family Lomellini, and belonging to it; which is, indeed, a moſt ſtately ſtructure, the inſide wholly marble of various kinds, except where gold and painting take its place. From hence to the Palazzo Doria. I ſhould make you ſick of marble, if I told you how it was laviſhed here upon the porticoes, the baluſtrades, and terraſes, the loweſt of which extends quite to the ſea. The inſide is by no means anſwerable to the outward magnificence; the furniture ſeems to be as old as the founder of the family *. There great imboſſed ſilver tables tell you, in bas-relief, his victories at ſea; how he entertained the Emperor Charles, and how he refuſed the ſovereignty of the Commonwealth when it was offered him; the reſt is old-faſhioned velvet chairs, and gothic tapeſtry. The reſt of the day has been ſpent, much to our hearts' content, in curſing French muſic and architecture, and in ſinging the praiſes of Italy. We find this place ſo very fine, that we are in fear of finding nothing finer. We are fallen in love with the Medi-

NOTE.

* The famous Andrea Doria.

Mediterrahean ſea, and hold your lakes and your rivers in vaſt contempt. This is

" The happy country where huge lemons grow,"

as Waller ſays; and I am ſorry to think of leaving it in a week for Parma, although it be

The happy country where huge cheeſes grow.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Bologna, Dec. 9, *N. S.* 1739.

OUR journey hither has taken up much leſs time than I expected. We left Genoa (a charming place, and one that deſerved a longer ſtay) the week before laſt; croſſed the mountains, and lay that night at Tortona, the next at St. Giovanni, and the morning after came to Piacenza. That city, (though the capital of a Dutchy) made ſo frippery an appearance, that inſtead of ſpending ſome days there, as had been intended, we only dined, and went on to Parma; ſtayed there all the following day, which was paſſed in viſiting the famous works of Corregio in the Dome, and other churches. The fine gallery of pictures,

that once belonged to the Dukes of Parma, is no more here; the King of Naples has carried it all thither, and the city had not merit enough to detain us any longer, ſo we proceeded through Reggio to Modena; this, though the reſidence of its Duke, is an ill-built melancholy place, all of brick, as are moſt of the towns in this part of Lombardy: He himſelf lives in a private manner, with very little appearance of a court about him; he has one of the nobleſt collections of paintings in the world, which entertained us extremely well the reſt of that day and a part of the next; and in the afternoon we came to Bologna: So now you may wiſh us joy of being in the dominions of his Holineſs. This is a populous city, and of great extent: All the ſtreets have porticoes on both ſides, ſuch as ſurround a part of Covent-Garden, a great relief in ſummer-time in ſuch a climate; and from one of the principal gates to a church of the Virgin, [where is a wonder-working picture, at three miles diſtance] runs a corridore of the ſame ſort, lately finiſhed, and, indeed, a moſt extraordinary performance. The churches here are more remarkable for their paintings than architecture, being moſtly old ſtructures of brick; but the palaces are numerous, and fine enough to ſupply us with ſomewhat worth ſeeing from morning till night. The

country

country of Lombardy, hitherto, is one of the moſt beautiful imaginable; the roads broad, and exactly ſtraight, and on either hand vaſt plantations of trees, chiefly mulberries and olives, and not a tree without a vine twining about it and ſpreading among its branches. This ſcene, indeed, which muſt be the moſt lovely in the world during the proper ſeaſon, is at preſent all deformed by the winter, which here is rigorous enough for the time it laſts; but one ſtill ſees the ſkeleton of a charming place, and reaps the benefit of its product, for the fruits and proviſions are admirable; in ſhort you find every thing, that luxury can deſire, in perfection. We have now been here a week, and ſhall ſtay ſome little time longer. We are at the foot of the Appennine mountains; it will take up three days to croſs them, and then we ſhall come to Florence, where we ſhall paſs the Chriſtmas. Till then we muſt remain in a ſtate of ignorance as to what is doing in England, for our letters are to meet us there: If I do not find four or five from you alone, I ſhall wonder.

LETTER XIV.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Florence, Dec. 19, *N. S.* 1739.

WE ſpent twelve days at Bologna, chiefly (as moſt travellers do) in ſeeing ſights; for as we knew no mortal there, and as it is no eaſy matter to get admiſſion into any Italian houſe, without very particular recommendations, we could ſee no company but in public places; and there are none in that city but the churches. We ſaw, therefore, churches, palaces, and pictures from morning to night; and the 15th of this month ſet out for Florence, and began to croſs the Apennine mountains; we travelled among and upon them all that day, and, as it was but indifferent weather, were commonly in the middle of thick clouds, that utterly deprived us of a ſight of their beauties: For this vaſt chain of hills has its beauties, and all the vallies are cultivated; even the mountains themſelves are many of them ſo within a little of their very tops. They are not ſo horrid as the Alps, though pretty near as high; and the whole road is admirably well kept, and paved throughout, which is a length of fourſcore miles,

and

and more: We left the Pope's dominions, and lay that night in thoſe of the Grand Duke at Fiorenzuola, a paltry little town, at the foot of Mount Giogo, which is the higheſt of them all. Next morning we went up it; the poſt-houſe is upon its very top, and uſually involved in clouds, or half-buried in the ſnow. Indeed there was none of the laſt at the time we were there, but it was ſtill a diſmal habitation. The deſcent is moſt exceſſively ſteep, and the turnings very ſhort and frequent; however, we performed it without any danger, and in coming down could dimly diſcover Florence, and the beautiful plain about it, through the miſts; but enough to convince us, it muſt be one of the nobleſt proſpects upon earth in ſummer. That afternoon we got thither; and Mr. Mann *, the reſident, had ſent his ſervant to meet us at the gates, and conduct us to his houſe. He is the beſt and moſt obliging perſon in the world. The next night we were introduced at the Prince of Craon's aſſembly (he has the chief power here in the Grand Duke's abſence). The Princeſs, and he, were extremely civil to the name of Walpole,

NOTE.

* Now Sir Horace Mann, and Envoy Extraordinary at the ſame court.

Walpole, ſo we were aſked to ſtay ſupper, which is as much as to ſay, you may come and ſup here whenever you pleaſe; for after the firſt invitation this is always underſtood. We have alſo been at the Counteſs Suarez's, a favourite of the late Duke, and one that gives the firſt movement to every thing gay that is going forward here. The news is every day expected from Vienna of the Great Dutcheſs's delivery; if it be a boy, here will be all ſorts of balls, maſquerades, operas, and illuminations; if not, we muſt wait for the Carnival, when all thoſe things come of courſe. In the mean time it is impoſſible to want entertainment; the famous gallery, alone, is an amuſement for months; we commonly paſs two or three hours every morning in it, and one has perfect leiſure to conſider all its beauties. You know it contains many hundred antique ſtatues, ſuch as the whole world cannot match, beſides the vaſt collection of paintings, medals, and precious ſtones, ſuch as no other prince was ever maſter of; in ſhort, all that the rich and powerful houſe of Medicis has in ſo many years got together *. And beſides this city abounds

NOTE.

* He catalogued and made occaſional ſhort remarks on the pictures, &c. which he ſaw here, as well as at other places, many of which are in my poſſeſſion, but it would have ſwelled this work too much if I had inſerted them.

abounds with ſo many palaces and churches, that you can hardly place yourſelf any where without having ſome fine one in view, or at leaſt ſome ſtatue or fountain, magnificently adorned; theſe undoubtedly are far more numerous than Genoa can pretend to; yet, in its general appearance, I cannot think that Florence equals it in beauty. Mr. Walpole is juſt come from being preſented to the Electreſs Palatine Dowager; ſhe is a ſiſter of the late Great Duke's; a ſtately old lady, that never goes out but to church, and then ſhe has guards, and eight horſes to her coach. She received him with much ceremony, ſtanding under a huge black canopy, and, after a few minutes talking, ſhe aſſured him of her good will, and diſmiſſed him: She never ſees any body but thus in form; and ſo ſhe paſſes her life, * poor woman! * * *

LETTER

NOTE.

* Perſons of very high rank, and withal very good ſenſe, will only feel the pathos of this exclamation.

LETTER XV.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Florence, Jan. 15, 1740.

I Think I have not yet told you how we left that charming place Genoa: How we croſſed a mountain all of green marble, called Buchetto: How we came to Tortona, and waded through the mud to come to Caſtel St. Giovanni, and there eat muſtard and ſugar with a diſh of crows' gizzards: Secondly, how we paſſed the famous plains

Quà Trebie glaucas ſalices interſeçat undâ,
Arvaque Romanis nobilitata malis.
Viſus adhuc amnis veteri de clade rubere,
Et ſuſpirantes ducere mæſtus aquas;
Maurorumque ala, & nigræ increbreſcere turmæ,
Et pulſa Auſonidum ripa ſonare fugâ.

Nor, thirdly, how we paſſed through Piacenza, Parma, Modena, entered the territories of the Pope; ſtayed twelve days at Bologna; croſſed the Apennines, and afterwards arrived at Florence. None of theſe things have I told you, nor do I intend to tell you, till you aſk me ſome queſtions concerning them. No not even

of

of Florence itſelf, except that it is as fine as poſſible, and has every thing in it that can bleſs the eyes. But, before I enter into particulars, you muſt make your peace both with me and the Venus de Medicis, who, let me tell you, is highly and juſtly offended at you for not inquiring, long before this, concerning her ſymmetry and proportions. * * *

LETTER XVI.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

ELEGIA. *

ERGO deſidiæ videor tibi crimine dignus;
Et meritò: victas do tibi ſponte manus.
Arguor & veteres nimium contemnere Muſas,
Irata et nobis eſt Medicæa Venus.
Mene igitur ſtatuas & inania ſaxa vereri!
Stultule! marmoreâ quid mihi cum Venere?
Hìc veræ, hìc vivæ Veneres, & mille per urbem,
Quarum nulla queat non placuiſſe Jovi.

Cedite

NOTE.

* The letter which accompanied this little elegy is not extant: Probably it was only incloſed in one to Mr. Walpole.

Cedite Romanæ formoſæ et cedite Graiæ,
Sintque oblita Helenæ nomen et Hermionæ!
Et, quaſcunque refert ætas vetus, Heroinæ:
Unus honor noſtris jam venit Angliaſin.
Oh quales vultus, Oh quantum numen ocellis!
I nunc & Tuſcas improbe confer opes.
Ne tamen hæc obtuſa nimis præcordia credas,
Neu me adeo nullâ Pallade progenitum:
Teſtor Pieridumque umbras & flumina Pindi
Me quoque Calliopes ſemper amaſſe choros;
Et dudum Auſonias urbes, & viſere Graias
Cura eſt, ingenio ſi licet ire meo:
Sive eſt Phidiacum marmor, ſeu Mentoris æra,
Seu paries Coo nobilis e calamo;
Nec minus artificum magna argumenta recentûm
Romanique decus nominis & Veneti:
Quà Furor & Mavors & ſævo in Marmore vultus,
Quaque et formoſo mollior ære Venus.
Quàque loquax ſpirat fucus, vivique labores,
Et quicquid calamo dulciùs auſa manus:
Hìc nemora, & ſolâ mærens Melibœus in umbrâ,
Lymphaque muſcoſo proſiliens lapide;
Illìc majus opus, facieſque in pariete major
Exurgens, Divûm & numina Cœlicolûm;

O vos fælices, quibus hæc cognoſcere fas eſt,
Et totâ Italiâ, quà patet uſque, frui!
Nulla dies vobis eat injucunda, nec uſquam
Norîtis quid ſit tempora amara pati.

LETTER XVII.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Florence, March 19, 1740.

THE Pope * is at laſt dead, and we are to ſet out for Rome on Monday next. The Conclave is ſtill ſitting there, and likely to continue ſo ſome time longer, as the two French Cardinals are but juſt arrived, and the German ones are ſtill expected. It agrees mighty ill with thoſe that remain incloſed: Ottoboni is already dead of an apoplexy; Altieri and ſeveral others are ſaid to be dying, or very bad: Yet it is not expected to break up till after Eaſter. We ſhall lie at Sienna the firſt night, ſpend a day there, and in two more get to Rome. One begins to ſee in this country the firſt promiſes of an Italian ſpring, clear unclouded

NOTE.

* Clement the Twelfth.

unclouded ſkies, and warm ſuns, ſuch as are not often felt in England; yet, for your ſake, I hope at preſent you have your proportion of them, and that all your froſts, and ſnows, and ſhort-breaths are, by this time, utterly vaniſhed. I have nothing new or particular to inform you of; and, if you ſee things at home go on much in their old courſe, you muſt not imagine them more various abroad. The diverſions of a Florentine Lent are compoſed of a ſermon in the morning, full of hell and the devil; a dinner at noon, full of fiſh and meager diet; and, in the evening, what is called a Converſazione, a ſort of aſſembly at the principal people's houſes, full of I cannot tell what: Beſides this, there is twice a week a very grand concert. * * *

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Rome, April 2, N. S. 1740.

THIS is the third day ſince we came to Rome, but the firſt hour I have had to write to you in. The journey from Florence coſt us four days, one of which was ſpent at Sienna, an agreeable, clean, old city,

city, of no great magnificence or extent; but in a fine ſituation, and good air. What it has moſt conſiderable is its cathedral, a huge pile of marble, black and white laid alternately, and laboured with a gothic niceneſs and delicacy in the old-faſhioned way. Within too are ſome paintings and ſculpture of conſiderable hands. The ſight of this, and ſome collections that were ſhewed us in private houſes, were a ſufficient employment for the little time we were to paſs there; and the next morning we ſet forward on our journey through a country very oddly compoſed; for ſome miles you have a continual ſcene of little mountains cultivated from top to bottom with rows of olive-trees, or elſe elms, each of which has its vine twining about it, and mixing with the branches; and corn ſown between all the ranks. This, diverſified with numerous ſmall houſes and convents, makes the moſt agreeable proſpect in the world: But, all of a ſudden, it alters to black barren hills, as far as the eye can reach, that ſeem never to have been capable of culture, and are as ugly as uſeleſs. Such is the country for ſome time before one comes to Mount Radicofani, a terrible black hill, on the top of which we were to lodge that night. It is very high, and difficult of aſcent; and at the foot of it we were much embarraſſed by the fall of one of the poor horſes

that

that drew us. This accident obliged another chaiſe, which was coming down, to ſtop alſo; and out of it peeped a figure in a red cloak, with a handkerchief tied round its head, which, by its voice and mien, ſeemed a fat old woman; but, upon its getting out, appeared to be Seneſino, who was returning from Naples to Sienna, the place of his birth and reſidence. On the higheſt part of the mountain is an old fortreſs, and near it a houſe built by one of the Grand Dukes for a hunting-ſeat, but now converted into an inn: It is the ſhell of a large fabrick, but ſuch an inſide, ſuch chambers, and accommodations, that your cellar is a palace in compariſon; and your cat ſups and lies much better than we did; for, it being a ſaint's eve, there was nothing but eggs. We devoured our meager fare; and, after ſtopping up the windows with the quilts, were obliged to lie upon the ſtraw beds in our clothes. Such are the conveniences in a road, that is, as it were, the great thoroughfare of all the world. Juſt on the other ſide of this mountain, at Ponte-Centino, one enters the patrimony of the church; a moſt delicious country, but thinly inhabited. That night brought us to Viterbo, a city of a more lively appearance than any we had lately met with; the houſes have glaſs windows, which is not very uſual here; and moſt of the ſtreets

are

are terminated by a handſome fountain. Here we had the pleaſure of breaking our faſt on the leg of an old hare and ſome broiled crows. Next morning, in deſcending Mount Viterbo, we firſt diſcovered (though at near thirty miles diſtance) the cupola of St. Peter's, and a little after began to enter on an old Roman pavement, with now and then a ruined tower, or a ſepulchre on each hand. We now had a clear view of the city, though not to the beſt advantage, as coming along a plain quite upon a level with it; however, it appeared very vaſt, and ſurrounded with magnificent villas and gardens. We ſoon after croſſed the Tiber, a river that ancient Rome made more conſiderable than any merit of its own could have done: However, it is not contemptibly ſmall, but a good handſome ſtream; very deep, yet ſomewhat of a muddy complexion. The firſt entrance of Rome is prodigiouſly ſtriking. It is by a noble gate, deſigned by Michel Angelo, and adorned with ſtatues; this brings you into a large ſquare, in the midſt of which is a vaſt obeliſk of granite, and in front you have at one view two churches of a handſome architecture, and ſo much alike that they are called the twins; with three ſtreets, the middlemoſt of which is one of the longeſt in Rome. As high as my expectation was raiſed, I confeſs, the magnificence of this city

infinitely

infinitely ſurpaſſes it. You cannot paſs along a ſtreet but you have views of ſome palace, or church, or ſquare, or fountain, the moſt pictureſque and noble one can imagine. We have not yet ſet about conſidering its beauties, ancient and modern, with attention; but have already taken a ſlight tranſient view of ſome of the moſt remarkable. St. Peter's I ſaw the day after we arrived, and was ſtruck dumb with wonder. I there ſaw the Cardinal D'Auvergne, one of the French ones, who, upon coming off his journey, immediately repaired hither to offer up his vows at the high altar, and went directly into the Conclave; the doors of which we ſaw opened to him, and all the other immured Cardinals came thither to receive him. Upon his entrance they were cloſed again directly. It is ſuppoſed they will not come to an agreement about a Pope till after Eaſter, though the confinement is very diſagreeable. I have hardly philoſophy enough to ſee the infinity of fine things, that are here daily in the power of any body that has money, without regretting the want of it; but cuſtom has the power of making things eaſy to one. I have not yet ſeen his majeſty of Great-Britain, &c. though I have the two boys in the gardens of the Villa Borgeſe, where they go a-ſhooting almoſt every day; it was at a diſtance, indeed, for we did not chooſe to meet

meet them, as you may imagine. This letter (like all thoſe the Engliſh ſend, or receive) will paſs through the hands of that family, before it comes to thoſe it was intended for. They do it more honour than it deſerves; and all they will learn from thence will be, that I deſire you to give my duty to my father, and wherever elſe it is due, and that I am, &c.

LETTER XIX.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Rome, April 15, 1740. *Good-Friday.*

TO-DAY I am juſt come from paying my adoration at St. Peter's to three extraordinary relicks, which are expoſed to public view only on theſe two days in the whole year, at which time all the confraternities in the city come in proceſſion to ſee them. It was ſomething extremely novel to ſee that vaſt church, and the moſt magnificent in the world, undoubtedly, illuminated (for it was night) by thouſands of little cryſtal lamps, diſpoſed in the figure of a huge croſs at the high altar, and ſeeming to hang alone in the air. All the light proceeded from this, and had the moſt

ſingular effect imaginable as one entered the great door. Soon after came one after another, I believe, thirty proceſſions, all dreſſed in linen frocks, and girt with a cord, their heads covered with a cowl all over, only two holes to ſee through left. Some of them were all black, others red, others white, others party-coloured; theſe were continually coming and going with their tapers and crucifixes before them; and to each company, as they arrived and knelt before the great altar, were ſhewn from a balcony at a great height, the three wonders, which are, you muſt know, the head of the ſpear that wounded Chriſt; St. Veronica's handkerchief, with the miraculous impreſſion of his face upon it; and a piece of the true croſs, on the ſight of which the people thump their breaſts, and kiſs the pavement with vaſt devotion. The tragical part of the ceremony is half a dozen wretched creatures, who with their faces covered, but naked to the waiſt, are in a ſide-chapel diſciplining themſelves with ſcourges full of iron prickles; but really in earneſt, as our eyes can teſtify, which ſaw their backs and arms ſo raw we ſhould have taken it for a red ſattin doublet torn, and ſhewing the ſkin through, had we not been convinced of the contrary by the blood which was plentifully

ſprinkled

ſprinkled about them. It is late; I give you joy of Porto-Bello, and many other things, which I hope are all true. * * * *

LETTER XX.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Tivoli, May 20, 1740.

THIS day being in the palace of his Highneſs the Duke of Modena, he laid his moſt ſerene commands upon me to write to Mr. Weſt, and ſaid he thought it for his glory, that I ſhould draw up an inventory of all his moſt ſerene poſſeſſions for the ſaid Weſt's peruſal.——Imprimis, a houſe, being in circumference a quarter of a mile, two feet and an inch; the ſaid houſe containing the following particulars, to wit, a great room. Item, another great room; item, a bigger room; item, another room; item, a vaſt room; item, a ſixth of the ſame; a ſeventh ditto; an eighth as before; a ninth as aboveſaid; a tenth (ſee N°. 1.); item, ten more ſuch, beſides twenty beſides, which, not to be too particular, we ſhall paſs over. The ſaid rooms contain nine chairs, two tables, five ſtools, and

a cricket. From whence we ſhall proceed to the garden, containing two millions of ſuperfine laurel hedges, a clump of cypreſs trees, and half the river Teverone, that piſſes into two thouſand ſeveral chamberpots. Finis.—Dame Nature deſired me to put in a liſt of her little goods and chattels, and, as they were ſmall, to be very minute about them. She has built here three or four little mountains, and laid them out in an irregular ſemi-circle; from certain others behind, at a greater diſtance, ſhe has drawn a canal, into which ſhe has put a little river of her's, called Anio; ſhe has cut a huge cleft between the two innermoſt of her four hills, and there ſhe has left it to its own diſpoſal; which ſhe has no ſooner done, but, like a heedleſs chit, it tumbles headlong down a declivity fifty feet perpendicular, breaks itſelf all to ſhatters, and is converted into a ſhower of rain, where the ſun forms many a bow, red, green, blue, and yellow. To get out of our metaphors without any further trouble, it is the moſt noble ſight in the world. The weight of that quantity of waters, and the force they fall with, have worn the rocks they throw themſelves among into a thouſand irregular craggs, and to a vaſt depth. In this channel it goes boiling along with a mighty noiſe till it comes to another ſteep, where you ſee it a ſecond time come roaring

roaring down (but firſt you muſt walk two miles farther) a greater height than before, but not with that quantity of waters; for by this time it has divided itſelf, being croſſed and oppoſed by the rocks, into four ſeveral ſtreams, each of which, in emulation of the great one, will tumble down too; and it does tumble down, but not from an equally elevated place; ſo that you have at one view all theſe caſcades intermixed with groves of olive and little woods, the mountains riſing behind them, and on the top of one (that which forms the extremity of one of the half-circle's horns) is ſeated the town itſelf. At the very extremity of that extremity, on the brink of the precipice, ſtands the Sybils' temple, the remains of a little rotunda, ſurrounded with its portico, above half of whoſe beautiful Corinthian pillars are ſtill ſtanding and entire; all this on one hand. On the other, the open Campagna of Rome, here and there a little caſtle on a hillock, and the city itſelf on the very brink of the horizon, indiſtinctly ſeen (being 18 miles off) except the dome of St. Peter's; which, if you look out of your window, wherever you are, I ſuppoſe, you can ſee. I did not tell you that a little below the firſt fall, on the ſide of the rock, and hanging over that torrent, are little ruins which they

they ſhew you for Horace's houſe, a curious ſituation to obſerve the

" Præceps Anio, & Tiburni lucus, & uda
" Mobilibus pomaria rivis."

Mæcenas did not care for ſuch a noiſe, it ſeems, and built him a houſe (which they alſo carry one to ſee) ſo ſituated that it ſees nothing at all of the matter, and for any thing he knew there might be no ſuch river in the world. Horace had another houſe on the other ſide of the Teverone, oppoſite to Mæcenas's; and they told us there was a bridge of communication, by which " andava il detto Signor per traſtullarſi coll iſteſſo Ora-" zio." In coming hither we croſſed the Aquæ Albulæ, a vile little brook that ſtinks like a fury, and they ſay it has ſtunk ſo theſe thouſand years. I forgot the Piſcina of Quintilius Varus, where he uſed to keep certain little fiſhes. This is very entire, and there is a piece of the aqueduct that ſupplied it too; in the garden below is old Rome, built in little, juſt as it was, they ſay. There are ſeven temples in it, and no houſes at all: They ſay there were none.

May 21.

We have had the pleaſure of going twelve miles out of our way to Paleſtrina. It has rained all day as if heaven and us were coming together. See my honeſty,

I do not mention a ſyllable of the temple of Fortune, becauſe I really did not ſee it; which, I think, is pretty well for an old traveller. So we returned along the Via Prænestina, ſaw the Lacus Gabinus and Regillus, where, you know, Caſtor and Pollux appeared upon a certain occaſion. And many a good old tomb we left on each hand, and many an Aqueduct,

Dumb are whoſe fountains, and their channels dry.

There are, indeed, two whole modern ones, works of Popes, that run about thirty miles a-piece in length; one of them conveys ſtill the famous Aqua Virgo to Rome, and adds vaſt beauty to the proſpect. So we came to Rome again, where waited for us a ſplendidiſſimo regalo of letters; in one of which came You, with your huge characters and wide intervals, ſtaring. I would have you to know, I expect you ſhould take a handſome crow-quill when you write to me, and not leave room for a pin's point in four ſides of a ſheet royal. Do you but find matter, I will find ſpectacles.

I have more time than I thought, and I will employ it in telling you about a ball that we were at the other evening. Figure to yourſelf a Roman villa; all its little apartments thrown open, and lighted up to the beſt advantage. At the upper end of the gallery, a fine concert,

concert, in which La Diamantina, a famous virtuoſa, played on the violin divinely, and ſung angelically; Giovannino and Paſqualini (great names in muſical ſtory) alſo performed miraculouſly. On each ſide were ranged all the ſecular grand monde of Rome, the Ambaſſadors, Princeſſes, and all that. Among the reſt Il Sereniſſimo Pretendente (as the Mantova gazette calls him) diſplayed his rueful length of perſon, with his two young ones, and all his miniſtry around him. "Poi nacque un grazioſo ballo," where the world danced, and I ſat in a corner regaling myſelf with iced fruits, and other pleaſant rinfreſcatives.

LETTER XXI.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Rome, May 1740.

MATER roſarum, cui teneræ vigent
Auræ Favonî, cui Venus it comes
Laſciva, Nympharum choreis
Et volucrum celebrata cantu!

Dic,

Dic, non inertem fallere quâ diem
Amat ſub umbrâ, ſeu ſinit aureum
Dormire plectrum, ſeu retentat
Pierio * Zephyrinus antro
Furore dulci plenus, & immemor
Reptantis inter frigora Tuſculi
Umbroſa, vel colles Amici
Palladiæ ſuperantis Albæ.
Dilecta Fauno, & capripedum choris
Pineta, teſtor vos, Anio minax
Quæcunque per clivos volutus
Præcipiti tremefecit amne,
Illius altum Tibur, & Æſulæ
Audîſſe ſylvas nomen amabiles,
Illius & gratas Latinis
Naiaſin ingeminâſſe rupes;
Nam me Latinæ Naiades uvidâ
Vidêre ripâ, quà niveas levi
Tam ſæpe lavit rore plumas
Dulcè canens Venuſinus ales;

Mirum

NOTE.

* He intitled this charming ode "Ad C. Favonium "Zephyrinum," and writ it immediately after his journey to Freſcati and the caſcades of Tivoli, which he deſcribes in the preceding letter.

Mirum! canenti conticuit nemus,
Sacrique ſontes, et retinent adhuc
(Sic Muſa juſſit) ſaxa molles
Docta modos, vetereſque lauri.
Mirare nec tu me citharæ rudem
Claudis laborantem numeris: loca
Amæna, jucundumque ver in-
-compoſitum docuere carmen;
Hærent ſub omni nam folio nigri
Phœbea lucî (credite) ſomnia,
Argutiuſque & lympha & auræ
Neſcio quid ſolito loquuntur.

I am to-day juſt returned from Alba, a good deal fatigued; for you know the Appian is ſomewhat tireſome *. We dined at Pompey's; he indeed was gone

NOTE.

* However whimſical this humour may appear to ſome readers, I choſe to inſert it, as it gives me an opportunity of remarking that Mr. Gray was extremely ſkilled in the cuſtoms of the ancient Romans; and has catalogued, in his common place book, their various eatables, wines, perfumes, cloaths, medicines, &c. with great preciſion, referring under every article to paſſages in the Poets and Hiſtorians where their names are mentioned.

for a few days to his Tuſculan, but, by the care of his Villicus, we made an admirable meal. We had the dugs of a pregnant ſow, a peacock, a diſh of thruſhes, a noble ſcarus juſt freſh from the Tyrrhene, and ſome conchylia of the Lake with garum ſauce: For my part I never eat better at Lucullus's table. We drank half a dozen cyathi a-piece of ancient Alban to Pholoë's health; and, after bathing, and playing an hour at ball, we mounted our eſſedum again, and proceeded up the mount to the temple. The prieſts there entertained us with an account of a wonderful ſhower of birds' eggs, that had fallen two days before, which had no ſooner touched the ground, but they were converted into gudgeons; as alſo that the night paſt a dreadful voice had been heard out of the Adytum, which ſpoke Greek during a full half hour, but no body underſtood it. But quitting my Romanities, to your great joy and mine, let me tell you, in plain Engliſh, that we come from Albano. The preſent town lies within the incloſure of Pompey's Villa in ruins. The Appian way runs through it, by the ſide of which, a little farther, is a large old tomb, with five pyramids upon it, which the learned ſuppoſe to be the burying-place of the family, becauſe they do not know whoſe it can be elſe. But the vulgar aſſure you it is the ſepulchre of

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the Curiatii, and by that name (ſuch is their power) it goes. One drives to Caſtel Gondolfo, a houſe of the Pope's, ſituated on the top of one of the Collinette, that forms a brim to the baſon, commonly called the Alban lake. It is ſeven miles round; and directly oppoſite to you, on the other ſide, riſes the Mons Albanus, much taller than the reſt, along whoſe ſide are ſtill diſcoverable (not to common eyes) certain little ruins of the old Alba longa. They had need be very little, as having been nothing but ruins ever ſince the days of Tullus Hoſtilius. On its top is a houſe of the Conſtable Colonna's, where ſtood the temple of Jupiter Latialis. At the foot of the hill Gondolfo, are the famous outlets of the lake, built with hewn ſtone, a mile and a half under ground. Livy, you know, amply informs us of the fooliſh occaſion of this expence, and gives me this opportunity of diſplaying all my erudition, that I may appear conſiderable in your eyes. This is the proſpect from one window of the palace. From another you have the whole Campagna, the City, Antium, and the Tyrrhene ſea (twelve miles diſtant) ſo diſtinguiſhable, that you may ſee the veſſels ſailing upon it. All this is charming. Mr. Walpole ſays, our memory ſees more than our eyes in this country. Which is extremely true; ſince, for realities, Windſor, or Richmond

mond Hill, is infinitely preferable to Albano or Freſcati. I am now at home, and going to the window to tell you it is the moſt beautiful of Italian nights, which, in truth, are but juſt begun (ſo backward has the ſpring been here, and every where elſe, they ſay). There is a moon! there are ſtars for you! Do not you hear the fountain? Do not you ſmell the orange flowers? That building yonder is the convent of S. Iſidore; and that eminence, with the cypreſs trees and pines upon it, the top of M. Quirinal. This is all true, and yet my proſpect is not two hundred yards in length. We ſend you ſome Roman inſcriptions to entertain you. The firſt two are modern, tranſcribed from the Vatican library by Mr. Walpole.

Pontifices olim quem fundavere priores,
Præcipuâ Sixtus perficit arte tholum *;
Et Sixti tantum ſe gloria tollit in altum,
Quantum ſe Sixti nobile tollit opus:
Magnus honos magni fundamina ponere templi,
Sed finem cæptis ponere major honos.

Saxa

NOTE.

* Sixtus V. built the dome of St. Peter's.

Saxa agit Amphion, Thebana ut mœnia condat:
Sixtus & immenſæ pondera molis agit *.
Saxa trahunt ambo longè diverſa: ſed arte
Hæc trahit Amphion; Sixtus & arte trahit.
At tantum exſuperat Dircæum Amphiona Sixtus,
Quantum hic exſuperat cætera ſaxa lapis.

Mine is ancient, and I think not leſs curious. It is exactly tranſcribed from a ſepulchral marble at the villa Giuſtiniani. I put ſtops to it, when I underſtand it.

DIs Manibus
Claudiæ, Piſtes
Primus Conjugi
Optumae, Sanctae,
Et Piae, Benemeritate.
Non æquos, Parcae, ſtatuiſtis ſtamina vitae.
Tam bene compoſitos potuiſtis ſede tenere.
Amiſſa eſt conjux. cur ego & ipſe moror?
Si · bella · eſſe · mî · iſte · mea · vivere · debuit ·
Triſtia contigerunt qui amiſſâ conjuge vivo.
Nil eſt tam miſerum, quam totam perdere vitam.
Nec vita enaſci dura peregiſtis crudelia penſa, ſorores,
Ruptaque

NOTE.

* He raiſed the obeliſk in the great area.

Ruptaque deficiunt in primo munere fuſi.
O nimis injuſtæ ter denos dare munus in annos,
Deceptus · grautus · fatum · ſic · preſſit · egeſtas ·
Dum vitam tulero, Primus Piſtes lugea conjugium.

LETTER XXII.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Naples, June 17, 1740.

OUR journey hither was through the moſt beautiful part of the fineſt country in the world; and every ſpot of it, on ſome account or other, famous for theſe three thouſand years paſt *. The ſeaſon has hitherto been juſt as warm as one would wiſh it; no unwholeſome

NOTE.

* Mr. Gray wrote a minute deſcription of every thing he ſaw in this tour from Rome to Naples; as alſo of the environs of Rome, Florence, &c. But as theſe papers are apparently only memorandums for his own uſe, I do not think it neceſſary to print them, although they abound with many uncommon remarks, and pertinent claſſical quotations. The reader will pleaſe to obſerve throughout this ſection, that it is not my intention to give Mr. Gray's Travels, but only extracts from the Letters which he writ during his travels.

wholeſome airs, or violent heats, yet heard of: The people call it a backward year, and are in pain about their corn, wine, and oil; but we, who are neither corn, wine, nor oil, find it very agreeable. Our road was through Velletri, Ciſterna, Terracina, Capua, and Averſa, and ſo to Naples. The minute one leaves his Holineſs's dominions, the face of things begins to change from wide uncultivated plains to olive groves and well-tilled fields of corn, intermixed with ranks of elms, every one of which has its vine twining about it, and hanging in feſtoons between the rows from one tree to another. The great old figtrees, the oranges in full bloom, and myrtles in every hedge, make one of the delightfulleſt ſcenes you can conceive; beſides that, the roads are wide, well-kept, and full of paſſengers, a ſight I have not beheld this long time. My wonder ſtill increaſed upon entering the city, which I think, for number of people, outdoes both Paris and London. The ſtreets are one continued market, and thronged with populace ſo much that a coach can hardly paſs. The common ſort are a jolly lively kind of animals, more induſtrious than Italians uſually are; they work till evening; then take their lute or guitar (for they all play) and walk about the city, or upon the ſea-ſhore with it, to enjoy the freſco. One ſees their little brown

children

children jumping about ſtark-naked, and the bigger ones dancing with caſtanets, while others play on the cymbal to them. Your maps will ſhow you the ſituation of Naples; it is on the moſt lovely bay in the world, and one of the calmeſt ſeas: It has many other beauties beſides thoſe of nature. We have ſpent two days in viſiting the remarkable places in the country round it, ſuch as the bay of Baiæ, and its remains of antiquity; the lake Avernus, and the Solfatara, Charon's grotto, &c. We have been in the Sybil's cave and many other ſtrange holes under-ground (I only name them, becauſe you may conſult Sandy's travels); but the ſtrangeſt hole I ever was in, has been to-day at a place called Portici, where his Sicilian Majeſty has a country-ſeat. About a year ago, as they were digging, they diſcovered ſome parts of ancient buildings above thirty feet deep in the ground: Curioſity led them on, and they have been digging ever ſince; the paſſage they have made, with all its turnings and windings, is now more than a mile long. As you walk, you ſee parts of an amphitheatre, many houſes adorned with marble columns, and incruſted with the ſame; the front of a temple, ſeveral arched vaults of rooms painted in freſco. Some pieces of painting have been taken out from hence, finer than any thing of the kind

before diſcovered, and with theſe the king has adorned his palace; alſo a number of ſtatues, medals, and gems; and more are dug out every day. This is known to be a Roman town *, that in the Emperor Titus's time was overwhelmed by a furious eruption of Mount Veſuvius, which is hard by. The wood and beams remain ſo perfect that you may ſee the grain; but burnt to a coal, and dropping into duſt upon the leaſt touch. We were to-day at the foot of that mountain, which at preſent ſmokes only a little, where we ſaw the materials that fed the ſtream of fire, which about four years ſince ran down its ſide. We have but a few days longer to ſtay here; too little in conſcience for ſuch a place. * * *

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. GRAY to his FATHER.

Florence, July 16, 1740.

AT my return to this city, the day before yeſterday, I had the pleaſure of finding yours dated June the 9th. The period of our voyages, at leaſt towards

NOTE.

* It ſhould ſeem by the omiſſion of its name, that it was not then diſcovered to be Herculaneum.

wards the South, is come, as you wiſh. We have been at Naples, ſpent nine or ten days there, and returned to Rome, where finding no likelihood of a Pope yet theſe three months, and quite wearied with the formal aſſemblies, and little ſociety of that great city, Mr. Walpole determined to return hither to ſpend the ſummer, where he imagines he ſhall paſs his time more agreeably than in the tedious expectation of what, when it happens, will only be a great ſhow. For my own part, I give up the thoughts of all that with but little regret; but the city itſelf I do not part with ſo eaſily, which alone has amuſements for whole years. However, I have paſſed through all that moſt people do, both ancient and modern; what that is you may ſee, better than I can tell you, in a thouſand books. The Conclave we left in greater uncertainty than ever; the more than ordinary liberty they enjoy there, and the unuſual coolneſs of the ſeaſon, makes the confinement leſs diſagreeable to them than common, and, conſequently, maintains them in their irreſolution. There have been very high words, one or two (it is ſaid) have come even to blows; two more are dead within this laſt month, Cenci and Portia; the latter died diſtracted; and we left another (Altieri) at the extremity: Yet no body dreams of an election till the latter end of Sep-

tember. All this gives great ſcandal to all good catholics, and every body talks very freely on the ſubject. The Pretender (whom you deſire an account of) I have had frequent opportunities of ſeeing at church, at the corſo, and other places; but more particularly, and that for a whole night, at a great ball given by Count Patrizii to the Prince and Princeſs Craon, (who were come to Rome at that time, that he might receive from the hands of the Emperor's miniſter there the order of the golden fleece) at which he and his two ſons were preſent. They are good fine boys, eſpecially the younger, who has the more ſpirit of the two, and both danced inceſſantly all night long. For him, he is a thin ill-made man, extremely tall and awkward, of a moſt unpromiſing countenance, a good deal reſembling King James the Second, and has extremely the air and look of an idiot, particularly when he laughs or prays. The firſt he does not often, the latter continually. He lives private enough with his little court about him, conſiſting of Lord Dunbar, who manages every thing, and two or three of the Preſton Scotch Lords, who would be very glad to make their peace at home.

We happened to be at Naples on Corpus Chriſti Day, the greateſt feaſt in the year, ſo had an opportunity

nity of ſeeing their Sicilian Majeſties to advantage. The King walked in the grand proceſſion, and the Queen (being big with child) ſat in a balcony. He followed the Hoſt to the church of St. Clara, where high maſs was celebrated to a glorious concert of muſic. They are as ugly a little pair as one can ſee: She a pale girl, marked with the ſmall-pox; and he a brown boy with a thin face, a huge noſe, and as ungain as poſſible.

We are ſettled here with Mr. Mann in a charming apartment; the river Arno runs under our windows, which we can fiſh out of. The ſky is ſo ſerene, and the air ſo temperate, that one continues in the open air all night long in a ſlight nightgown without any danger; and the marble bridge is the reſort of every body, where they hear muſic, eat iced fruits, and ſup by moon-light; though as yet (the ſeaſon being extremely backward every where) theſe amuſements are not begun. You ſee we are now coming northward again, though in no great haſte; the Venetian and Milaneſe territories, and either Germany or the South of France, (according to the turn the war may take) are all that remain for us, that we have not yet ſeen; as to Loretto, and that part of Italy, we have given over all thoughts of it.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. WEST to Mr. GRAY.

Bond-ſtreet, June 5, 1740.

I Lived at the Temple till I was ſick of it: I have juſt left it, and find myſelf as much a lawyer as I was when I was in it. It is certain, at leaſt, I may ſtudy the law here as well as I could there. My being in chambers did not ſignify to me a pinch of ſnuff. They tell me my father was a lawyer, and, as you know, eminent in the profeſſion; and ſuch a circumſtance muſt be of advantage to me. My uncle too makes ſome figure in Weſtminſter hall; and there's another advantage: Then my grandfather's name would get me many friends. Is it not ſtrange that a young fellow, that might enter the world with ſo many advantages, will not know his own intereſt? &c. &c.—What ſhall I ſay in anſwer to all this? For money, I neither doat upon it nor deſpiſe it; it is a neceſſary ſtuff enough. For ambition, I do not want that neither; but it is not to ſit upon a bench. In ſhort, is it not a diſagreeable thing to force one's inclination, eſpecially when one's young? not to mention that one ought to have

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the ſtrength of a Hercules to go through our common law; which, I am afraid, I have not. Well! but then, ſay they, if one profeſſion does not ſuit you, you may chooſe another more to your inclination. Now I proteſt I do not yet know my own inclination, and I believe, if that was to be my direction, I ſhould never fix at all: There is no going by a weathercock.——I could ſay much more upon this ſubject; but there is no talking tête-à-tête croſs the Alps. Oh the folly of young men, that never know their own intereſt! they never grow wiſe till they are ruined! and then no body pities them, nor helps them.—Dear Gray! conſider me in the condition of one that has lived theſe two years without any perſon that he can ſpeak freely to. I know it is very ſeldom that people trouble themſelves with the ſentiments of thoſe they converſe with; ſo they can chat about trifles, they never care whether your heart aches or no. Are you one of theſe? I think not. But what right have I to aſk you this queſtion? Have we known one another enough, that I ſhould expect or demand ſincerity from you? Yes, Gray, I hope we have; and I have not quite ſuch a mean opinion of myſelf, as to think I do not deſerve it.—But, Signor, is it not time for me to aſk ſomething about your further intentions abroad? Where do you propoſe going next?

next? an in Apuliam? nam illò ſi adveneris, tanquam Ulyſſes, cognoſces tuorum neminem. Vale. So Cicero propheſies in the end of one of his letters *—and there I end. Yours, &c.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Florence, July 16, 1740.

YOU do yourſelf and me juſtice, in imagining that you merit, and that I am capable of ſincerity. I have not a thought, or even a weakneſs, I deſire to conceal from you; and conſequently on my ſide deſerve to be treated with the ſame openneſs of heart. My vanity perhaps might make me more reſerved towards you, if you were one of the heroic race, ſuperior

NOTE.

* This letter (written apparently in much agitation of mind, which Mr. Weſt endeavours to conceal by an unuſual careleſſneſs of manner) is chiefly inſerted to introduce the anſwer to it; which appears to me to be replete with delicate feeling, manly ſenſe, and epiſtolary eaſe. If the reader ſhould think as highly of it as I do, let me remind him that the writer was not now quite four and twenty years old.

rior to all human failings; but as mutual wants are the ties of general ſociety, ſo are mutual weakneſſes of private friendſhips, ſuppoſing them mixt with ſome proportion of good qualities; for where one may not ſometimes blame, one does not much care ever to praiſe. All this has the air of an introduction deſigned to ſoften a very harſh reproof that is to follow; but it is no ſuch matter: I only meant to aſk, Why did you change your lodging? Was the air bad, or the ſituation melancholy? If ſo, you are quite in the right. Only, is it not putting yourſelf a little out of the way of a people, with whom it ſeems neceſſary to keep up ſome ſort of intercourſe and converſation, though but little for your pleaſure or entertainment, (yet there are, I believe, ſuch among them as might give you both) at leaſt for your information in that ſtudy, which, when I left you, you thought of applying to? for that there is a certain ſtudy neceſſary to be followed, if we mean to be of any uſe in the world, I take for granted; diſagreeable enough (as moſt neceſſities are) but, I am afraid, unavoidable. Into how many branches theſe ſtudies are divided in England, every body knows; and between that which you and I had pitched upon, and the other two, it was impoſſible to balance long. Examples ſhew one that it is not abſolutely neceſſary to be a blockhead

blockhead to ſucceed in this profeſſion. The labour is long, and the elements dry and unentertaining; nor was ever any body (eſpecially thoſe that afterwards made a figure in it) amuſed, or even not diſguſted in the beginning; yet, upon a further acquaintance, there is ſurely matter for curioſity and reflection. It is ſtrange if, among all that huge maſs of words, there be not ſomewhat intermixed for thought. Laws have been the reſult of long deliberation, and that not of dull men, but the contrary; and have ſo cloſe a connection with hiſtory, nay, with philoſophy itſelf, that they muſt partake a little of what they are related to ſo nearly. Beſides, tell me, have you ever made the attempt? Was not you frighted merely with the diſtant proſpect? Had the Gothic character and bulkineſs of thoſe volumes (a tenth part of which perhaps it will be no further neceſſary to conſult, than as one does a dictionary) no ill effect upon your eye? Are you ſure, if Coke had been printed by Elzevir, and bound in twenty neat pocket volumes, inſtead of one folio, you ſhould never have taken him up for an hour, as you would a Tully, or drank your tea over him? I know how great an obſtacle ill ſpirits are to reſolution. Do you really think, if you rid ten miles every morning, in a week's time you ſhould not entertain much ſtronger hopes of

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the Chancellorſhip, and think it a much more probable thing than you do at preſent? The advantages you mention are not nothing; our inclinations are more than we imagine in our own power; reaſon and reſolution determine them, and ſupport under many difficulties. To me there hardly appears to be any medium between a public life and a private one; he who prefers the firſt, muſt put himſelf in a way of being ſerviceable to the reſt of mankind, if he has a mind to be of any conſequence among them: Nay, he muſt not refuſe being in a certain degree even dependent upon ſome men who are ſo already. If he has the good fortune to light on ſuch as will make no ill uſe of his humility, there is no ſhame in this: If not, his ambition ought to give place to a reaſonable pride, and he ſhould apply to the cultivation of his own mind thoſe abilities which he has not been permitted to uſe for others' ſervice. Such a private happineſs (ſuppoſing a ſmall competence of fortune) is almoſt always in every one's power, and the proper enjoyment of age, as the other is the employment of youth. You are yet young, have ſome advantages and opportunities, and an undoubted capacity, which you have never yet put to the trial. Set apart a few hours, ſee how the firſt year will agree with you, at the end of it you are ſtill the maſter; if you change

your mind, you will only have got the knowledge of a little ſomewhat that can do no hurt, or give you cauſe of repentance. If your inclination be not fixed upon any thing elſe, it is a ſymptom that you are not abſolutely determined againſt this, and warns you not to miſtake mere indolence for inability. I am ſenſible there is nothing ſtronger againſt what I would perſuade you to, than my own practice; which may make you imagine I think not as I ſpeak. Alas! it is not ſo; but I do not act what I think, and I had rather be the object of your pity, than that you ſhould be that of mine; and, be aſſured, the advantage I may receive from it, does not diminiſh my concern in hearing you want ſome body to converſe with freely, whoſe advice might be of more weight, and always at hand. We have ſome time ſince come to the ſouthern period of our voyages; we ſpent about nine days at Naples. It is the largeſt and moſt populous city, as its environs are the moſt deliciouſly fertile country, of all Italy. We ſailed in the bay of Baiæ, ſweated in the Solfatara, and died in the grotto del Cane, as all ſtrangers do; ſaw the Corpus Chriſti proceſſion, and the King and the Queen, and the city underground, (which is a wonder I reſerve to tell you of another time) and ſo returned to Rome for another fortnight; left it (left Rome!) and came hither

hither for the ſummer. You have ſeen * an Epiſtle to Mr. Aſhton, that ſeems to me full of ſpirit and thought, and a good deal of poetic fire. I would know your opinion. Now I talk of verſes, Mr. Walpole and I have frequently wondered you ſhould never mention a certain imitation of Spenſer, publiſhed laſt year by a † nameſake of yours, with which we are all enraptured and enmarvailed.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. GRAY to his MOTHER.

Florence, Aug. 21, *N. S.* 1740.

IT is ſome time ſince I have had the pleaſure of writing to you, having been upon a little excurſion croſs the mountains to Bologna. We ſet out from hence at ſunſet, paſſed the Apennines by moon-light, travelling inceſſantly till we came to Bologna at four in

NOTE.

* The reader will find this in Dodſley's Miſcellany, and alſo amongſt Mr. Walpole's Fugitive Pieces.

† Gilbert Weſt, Eſq. This poem "On the Abuſe of "Travelling" is alſo in Dodſley's Miſcellany.

in the afternoon next day. There we ſpent a week agreeably enough, and returned as we came. The day before yeſterday arrived the news of a Pope; and I have the mortification of being within four days journey of Rome, and not ſeeing his coronation, the heats being violent, and the infectious air now at its height. We had an inſtance, the other day, that it is not only fancy. Two country fellows, ſtrong men, and uſed to the country about Rome, having occaſion to come from thence hither, and travelling on foot, as common with them, one died ſuddenly on the road; the other got hither, but extremely weak, and in a manner ſtupid; he was carried to the hoſpital, but died in two days. So, between fear and lazineſs, we remain here, and muſt be ſatisfied with the accounts other people give us of the matter. The new Pope is called Benedict XIV. being created Cardinal by Benedict XIII. the laſt Pope but one. His name is Lambertini, a noble Bologneſe, and Archbiſhop of that city. When I was firſt there, I remember to have ſeen him two or three times; he is a ſhort, fat man, about ſixty-five years of age, of a hearty, merry countenance, and likely to live ſome years. He bears a good character for generoſity, affability, and other virtues; and, they ſay, wants neither knowledge nor capacity. The worſt ſide of him is, that

he

he has a nephew or two; beſides a certain young favourite, called Melara, who is ſaid to have had, for ſome time, the arbitrary diſpoſal of his purſe and family. He is reported to have made a little ſpeech to the Cardinals in the Conclave, while they were undetermined about an election, as follows: "Moſt eminent "Lords, here are three Bologneſe of different charac- "ters, but all equally proper for the Popedom. If it "be your pleaſures, to pitch upon a Saint, there is "Cardinal Gotti; if upon a Politician, there is Al- "drovandi; if upon a Booby, here am I." The Italian is much more expreſſive, and, indeed, not to be tranſlated; wherefore, if you meet with any body that underſtands it, you may ſhew them what he ſaid in the language he ſpoke it. "Eminſſimi. Sigri. Ci ſiamo tré, "diverſi sì, mà tutti idonei al Papato. Se vi piace un "Santo, c' è l'Gotti; ſe volete una teſta ſcaltra, e Po- "litica, c' è l'Aldrovandé; ſe un Coglione, ecco mi!" Cardinal Coſcia is reſtored to his liberty, and, it is ſaid, will be to all his benefices. Corſini (the late Pope's nephew) as he has had no hand in this election, it is hoped, will be called to account for all his villanous practices. The Pretender, they ſay, has reſigned all his pretenſions to his eldeſt boy, and will accept of the Grand Chancellorſhip, which is thirty thouſand crowns

a-year;

a-year; the penſion he has at preſent is only twenty thouſand. I do not affirm the truth of this laſt article; becauſe, if he does, it is neceſſary he ſhould take the eccleſiaſtical habit, and it will ſound mighty odd to be called his Majeſty the Chancellor.——So ends my Gazette.

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Florence, Sept. 25, *N. S.* 1740.

WHAT I ſend you now, as long as it is, is but a piece of a poem. It has the advantage of all fragments, to need neither introduction nor concluſion: Beſides, if you do not like it, it is but imagining that which went before, and came after, to be infinitely better. Look in Sandy's Travels for the hiſtory of Monte Barbaro, and Monte Nuovo. *

* * * * *

Nec

NOTE.

* To ſave the reader trouble, I here inſert the paſſage referred to:—"Weſt of Cicero's Villa ſtands the eminent Gaurus, a ſtony and deſolate mountain, in which there are diverſe

Nec procul infelix ſe tollit in æthera Gaurus,
Proſpiciens vitreum lugenti vertice pontum:
Triſtior ille diu, & veteri deſuetus olivâ
Gaurus, pampineæque eheu jam neſcius umbræ;
Horrendi tam ſæva premit vicinia montis,
Attonitumque urget latus, exuritque ferentem.

NOTE.

diverſe obſcure caverns, choaked almoſt with earth, where many have conſumed much fruitleſs induſtry in ſearching for treaſure. The famous Lucrine Lake extended formerly from Avernus to the aforeſaid Gaurus: But is now no other than a little ſedgy plaſh, choaked up by the horrible and aſtoniſhing eruption of the new mountain; whereof, as oft as I think, I am eaſy to credit whatſoever is wonderful. For who here knows not, or who elſewhere will believe, that a mountain ſhould ariſe, (partly out of a lake and partly out of the ſea) in one day and a night, unto ſuch a height as to contend in altitude with the high mountains adjoining? In the year of our Lord 1538, on the 29th of September, when for certain days foregoing the country hereabout was ſo vexed with perpetual earthquakes, as no one houſe was left ſo entire as not to expect an immediate ruin; after that the ſea had retired two hundred paces from the ſhore, (leaving abundance of fiſh, and ſprings of freſh water riſing in the bottom) this mountain viſibly aſcended, about the ſecond

hour

Nam fama eſt olim, mediâ dum rura filebant
Nocte, Deo victa, & molli perfuſa quiete,
Infremuiſſe æquor ponti, auditamque per omnes
Latè tellurem ſurdùm immugire cavernas:
Quo ſonitu nemora alta tremunt; tremit excita tutò
Parthenopæa ſinu, flammantiſque ora Veſevi.
At ſubitò ſe aperire ſolum, vaſtoſque receſſus
Pandere ſub pedibus, nigrâque voragine fauces;

Tum

NOTE.

hour of the night, with an hideous roaring, horribly vomiting ſtones and ſuch ſtore of cinders as overwhelmed all the building thereabout, and the ſalubrious baths of Tripergula, for ſo many ages celebrated; conſumed the vines to aſhes, killing birds and beaſts: the fearful inhabitants of Puzzol flying through the dark with their wives and children; naked, defiled, crying out, and deteſting their calamities. Manifold miſchiefs have they ſuffered by the barbarous, yet none like this which Nature inflicted.——This new mountain, when newly raiſed, had a number of iſſues; at ſome of them ſmoking and ſometimes flaming; at others diſgorging rivulets of hot waters; keeping within a terrible rumbling; and many miſerably periſhed that ventured to deſcend into the hollowneſs above. But that hollow on the top is at preſent an orchard, and the mountain throughout is bereft of its terrors."

Sandy's Travels, book 4, page 275, 277, and 278.

Tum piceas cinerum glomerare ſub æthere nubes
Vorticibus rapidis, ardentique imbre procellam.
Præcipites fugere feræ, perque avia longè
Sylvarum fugit paſtor, juga per deſerta,
Ah, miſer! increpitans ſæpè altâ voce per umbram
Nequicquam natos, creditque audire ſequentes.
Atque ille excelſo rupis de vertice ſolus
Reſpectans notaſque domos, & dulcia regna,
Nil uſquàm videt infelix præter mare triſti
Lumine percuſſum, & pallentes ſulphure campos,
Fumumque, flammaſque, rotataque turbine ſaxa.
Quin ubi detonuit fragor, & lux reddita cœlo;
Mæſtos confluere agricolas, paſſuque videres
Tandem iterum timido deſerta requirere tecta:
Sperantes, ſi forte oculis, ſi forte darentur
Uxorum cineres, miſerorumve oſſa parentum
(Tenuia, ſed tanti ſaltem ſolatia luctus)
Unà colligere & juſtâ componere in urnâ.
Uxorum nuſquam cineres, nuſquam oſſa parentum
(Spem miſeram!) aſſuetoſve Lares, aut rura videbunt.
Quippe ubi planities campi diffuſa jacebat;
Mons novus: ille ſupercilium, frontemque favillâ
Incanum oſtentans, ambuſtis cautibus, æquor
Subjectum, ſtragemque ſuam, mæſta arva, minaci
Deſpicit imperio, ſoloque in littore regnat.

Hinc infame loci nomen, multoſque per annos
Immemor antiquæ laudis, neſcire labores
Vomeris, & nullo tellus revireſcere cultu.
Non avium colles, non carmine matutino
Paſtorum reſonare; adeò undique dirus habebat
Informes latè horror agros ſaltuſque vacantes.
Sæpius et longé detorquens navita proram
Monſtrabat digito littus, ſævæque revolvens
Funera narrabat noctis, veteremque ruinam.
Montis adhuc facies manet hirta atque aſpera ſaxis:
Sed furor extinctus jamdudum, & flamma quievit,
Quæ naſcenti aderat; ſeu forté bituminis atri
Defluxere olim rivi, atque effœta lacuna
Pabula ſufficere ardori, vireſque recuſat;
Sive in viſceribus meditans incendia jam nunc
(Horrendùm) arcanis glomerat genti eſſe futuræ
Exitio, ſparſos tacituſque recolligit ignes.
Raro per clivos haud ſecius ordine vidi
Caneſcentem oleam: longum poſt tempus amicti
Vite virent tumuli; patriamque reviſere gaudens
Bacchus in aſſuetis tenerum caput exerit arvis
Vix tandem, infidoque audet ſe credere cœlo.

There was a certain little ode * ſet out from Rome, in a letter of recommendation to you, but poſſibly fell into

NOTE.

* The Alcaic Ode inſerted in Letter XXI.

into the enemies' hands, for I never heard of its arrival. It is a little impertinent to inquire after its welfare; but you, that are a father, will excuſe a parent's fooliſh fondneſs. Laſt poſt I received a very diminutive letter: It made excuſes for its unentertainingneſs, very little to the purpoſe; ſince it aſſured me, very ſtrongly, of your eſteem, which is to me the thing; all the reſt appear but as the petits agrémens, the garniſhing of the diſh. P. Bougeant, in his langage des Bêtes, fancies that your birds, who continually repeat the ſame note, ſay only in plain terms, "Je vous aime, ma chere; "ma chere, je vous aime;" and that thoſe of greater genius indeed, with various trills, run diviſions upon the ſubject; but that the *fond*, from whence it all proceeds, is "toujours je vous aime." Now you may, as you find yourſelf dull or in humour, either take me for a chaffinch or nightingale; ſing your plain ſong, or ſhow your ſkill in muſic, but in the bottom let there be, toujours, toujours de l'Amitié.

As to what you call my ſerious letter; be aſſured, that your future ſtate is to me entirely indifferent. Do not be angry, but hear me; I mean with reſpect to myſelf. For whether you be at the top of Fame, or entirely unknown to mankind; at the Council-table, or

or at Dick's coffee-houſe; ſick and ſimple, or well and wiſe; whatever alteration mere accident works in you, (ſuppoſing it utterly impoſſible for it to make any change in your ſincerity and honeſty, ſince theſe are conditions ſine quâ non) I do not ſee any likelihood of my not being yours ever.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. GRAY to his FATHER.

Florence, Oct. 9, 1740.

THE beginning of next ſpring is the time determined for our return at furtheſt; poſſibly it may be before that time. How the interim will be employed, or what route we ſhall take, is not ſo certain. If we remain friends with France, upon leaving this country we ſhall croſs over to Venice, and ſo return through the cities north of the Po to Genoa; from thence take a felucca to Marſeilles, and come back through Paris. If the contrary fall out, which ſeems not unlikely, we muſt take the Milaneſe, and thoſe parts of Italy, in our way to Venice; from thence paſs through the Tirol into Germany, and come home by the

the Low-Countries. As for Florence, it has been gayer than ordinary for this laſt month, being one round of balls and entertainments, occaſioned by the arrival of a great Milaneſe Lady; for the only thing the Italians ſhine in, is their reception of ſtrangers. At ſuch times every thing is magnificence: The more remarkable, as in their ordinary courſe of life they are parſimonious, even to a degree of naſtineſs. I ſaw in one of the vaſteſt palaces in Rome (that of Prince Pamfilio) the apartment which he himſelf inhabited, a bed that moſt ſervants in England would diſdain to lie in, and furniture much like that of a ſoph at Cambridge, for convenience and neatneſs. This man is worth 30,000 l. ſterling a year. As for eating, there are not two Cardinals in Rome that allow more than ſix paoli, which is three ſhillings a day, for the expence of their table; and you may imagine they are ſtill leſs extravagant here than there. But when they receive a viſit from any friend, their houſes and perſons are ſet out to the greateſt advantage, and appear in all their ſplendour; it is, indeed, from a motive of vanity, and with the hopes of having it repaid them with intereſt, whenever they have occaſion to return the viſit. I call viſits going from one city of Italy to another; for it is not ſo among acquaintance of the ſame place on common occaſions. The new Pope has

retrenched

retrenched the charges of his own table to a ſequin (ten ſhillings) a meal. The applauſe which all he ſays and does meets with, is enough to encourage him really to deſerve fame. They ſay he is an able and honeſt man; he is reckoned a wit too. The other day, when the Senator of Rome came to wait upon him, at the firſt compliments he made him the Pope pulled off his cap: His Maſter of the Ceremonies, who ſtood by his ſide, touched him ſoftly, as to warn him that ſuch a condeſcenſion was too great in him, and out of all manner of rule: Upon which he turned to him and ſaid, "Oh! I cry you mercy, good Maſter, it is true, "I am but a Novice of a Pope; I have not yet ſo "much as learned ill manners." * * *

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. GRAY to his FATHER.

Florence, * *Jan.* 12, 1741.

WE ſtill continue conſtant at Florence, at preſent one of the dulleſt cities in Italy. Though it is the middle of the Carnival there are no public diverſions;

NOTE.

* Between the date of this and the foregoing letter, the reader will perceive an interval of full three months: as Mr. Gray ſaw no new places during this period, his letters were chiefly of news and common occurrences, and are therefore omitted.

ſions; nor is maſquerading permitted as yet. The Emperor's obſequies are to be celebrated publickly the 16th of this month; and after that, it is imagined every thing will go on in its uſual courſe. In the mean time, to employ the minds of the populace, the Government has thought fit to bring into the city in a ſolemn manner, and at a great expence, a famous ſtatue of the Virgin called the Madonna dell'Impruneta, from the place of her reſidence, which is upon a mountain ſeven miles off. It never has been practiſed but at times of public calamity; and was done at preſent to avert the ill effects of a late great inundation, which it was feared might cauſe ſome epidemical diſtemper. It was introduced a fortnight ago in proceſſion, attended by the Council of Regency, the Senate, the Nobility, and all the Religious Orders, on foot and bare-headed, and ſo carried to the great church, where it was frequented by an infinite concourſe of people from all the country round. Among the reſt I paid my devotions almoſt every day, and ſaw numbers of people poſſeſſed with the devil, who were brought to be exorciſed. It was indeed in the evening, and the church-doors were always ſhut before the ceremonies were finiſhed, ſo that I could not be eye-witneſs of the event; but that they were all cured is certain, for one never heard any more of them the

next morning. I am to-night juſt returned from ſeeing our Lady make her exit with the ſame ſolemnities ſhe entered. The ſhow had a finer effect than before; for it was dark; and every body (even thoſe of the mob that could afford it) bore a white-wax flambeau. I believe there were at leaſt five thouſand of them, and the march was near three hours in paſſing before the window. The ſubject of all this devotion is ſuppoſed to be a large Tile with a rude figure in bas-relief upon it. I ſay ſuppoſed, becauſe ſince the time it was found (for it was found in the earth in ploughing) only two people have ſeen it; the one was, by good-luck, a ſaint; the other was ſtruck blind for his preſumption. Ever ſince ſhe has been covered with ſeven veils; nevertheleſs, thoſe who approach her tabernacle caſt their eyes down, for fear they ſhould ſpy her through all her veils. Such is the hiſtory, as I had it from the Lady of the houſe where I ſtood to ſee her paſs; with many other circumſtances; all which ſhe firmly believes, and ten thouſand beſides.

We ſhall go to Venice in about ſix weeks, or ſooner. A number of German troops are upon their march into this State, in caſe the King of Naples thinks proper to attack it. It is certain he has aſked the Pope's leave

for

for his troops to paſs through his country. The Tuſcans in general are much diſcontented, and fooliſh enough to wiſh for a Spaniſh government, or any rather than this. * * * *

LETTER XXX.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. WEST.

Florence, April 21, 1741.

I Know not what degree of ſatisfaction it will give you to be told that we ſhall ſet out from hence the 24th of this month, and not ſtop above a fortnight at any place in our way. This I feel, that you are the principal pleaſure I have to hope for in my own country. Try at leaſt to make me imagine myſelf not indifferent to you; for I muſt own I have the vanity of deſiring to be eſteemed by ſomebody, and would chooſe that ſomebody ſhould be one whom I eſteem as much as I do you. As I am recommending myſelf to your love, methinks I ought to ſend you my picture (for I am no more what I was, ſome circumſtances excepted, which I hope I need not particularize to you); you muſt add then, to your former idea, two years of age, a reaſonable

able quantity of dullneſs, a great deal of ſilence, and ſomething that rather reſembles, than is, thinking; a confuſed notion of many ſtrange and fine things that have ſwum before my eyes for ſome time, a want of love for general ſociety, indeed an inability to it. On the good ſide you may add a ſenſibility for what others feel, and indulgence for their faults or weakneſſes, a love of truth, and deteſtation of every thing elſe. Then you are to deduct a little impertinence, a little laughter, a great deal of pride, and ſome ſpirits. Theſe are all the alterations I know of, you perhaps may find more. Think not that I have been obliged for this reformation of manners to reaſon or reflection, but to a ſeverer ſchool-miſtreſs, Experience. One has little merit in learning her leſſons, for one cannot well help it; but they are more uſeful than others, and imprint themſelves in the very heart. I find I have been haranguing in the ſtyle of the Son of Sirach, ſo ſhall finiſh here, and tell you that our route is ſettled as follows: Firſt to Bologna for a few days, to hear the Viſcontina ſing; next to Reggio, where is a Fair. Now, you muſt know, a Fair here is not a place where one eats gingerbread or rides upon hobby-horſes; here are no muſical clocks, nor tall Leiceſterſhire women; one has nothing but maſquing, gaming, and ſinging. If you love operas,

there

there will be the moſt ſplendid in Italy, four tip-top voices, a new theatre, the Duke and Dutcheſs in all their pomps and vanities. Does not this ſound magnificent? Yet is the city of Reggio but one ſtep above Old Brentford. Well; next to Venice by the 11th of May, there to ſee the old Doge wed the Adriatic Whore. Then to Verona, ſo to Milan, ſo to Marſeilles, ſo to Lyons, ſo to Paris, ſo to Weſt, &c. in ſæcula ſæculorum. Amen.

Eleven months, at different times, have I paſſed at Florence; and yet (God help me) know not either people or language. Yet the place and the charming proſpects demand a poetical farewell, and here it is.

* * Oh Fæſulæ amæna
Frigoribus juga, nec nimiùm ſpirantibus auris!
Alma quibus Tuſci Pallas decus Apennini
Eſſe dedit, glaucâque ſuâ caneſcere ſylvâ!
Non ego vos poſthàc Arni de valle videbo
Porticibus circum, & candenti cincta coronâ
Villarum longè nitido conſurgere dorſo,
Antiquamve Ædem, et veteres præferre Cupreſſus
Mirabor, tectiſque ſuper pendentia tecta.

I will ſend you, too, a pretty little Sonnet of a Sig^r. Abbate Buondelmonte, with my imitation of it.

Speſſo Amor ſotto la forma
D'amiſtà ride, e s'aſconde:
Poi ſi miſchia, e ſi confonde
Con lo ſdegno, e col rancor.
In Pietade ei ſi trasforma;
Par traſtullo, e par diſpetto:
Mà nel ſuo diverſo aſpetto
Sempr'egli, è l'iſteſſo Amor.

Luſit amicitiæ interdum velatus amictu,
Et benè compoſitâ veſte fefellit Amor.
Mox iræ aſſumſit cultus, faciemque minantem,
Inque odium verſus, verſus & in lacrymas:
Ludentem fuge, nec lacrymanti, aut crede furenti;
Idem eſt diſſimili ſemper in ore Deus.

Here comes a letter from you.—I muſt defer giving my opinion of * Pauſanias till I can ſee the whole, and only

NOTE.

* Some part of a Tragedy under that title, which Mr. Weſt had begun; but I do not find amongſt Mr. Gray's papers either the ſketch itſelf, or Mr. Gray's free critique upon it, which he here mentions.

only have ſaid what I did in obedience to your commands. I have ſpoken with ſuch freedom on this head, that it ſeems but juſt you ſhould have your revenge; and therefore I ſend you the beginning not of an Epic Poem, but of * a Metaphyſic one. Poems and Metaphyſics (ſay you, with your ſpectacles on) are inconſiſtent things. A metaphyſical poem is a contradiction in terms. It is true, but I will go on. It is Latin too to increaſe the abſurdity. It will, I ſuppoſe, put you in mind of the man who wrote a treatiſe of Canon Law in Hexameters. Pray help me to the deſcription of a mixt mode, and a little Epiſode about Space.

Mr. Walpole and Mr. Gray ſet out from Florence at the time ſpecified in the foregoing Letter. When Mr. Gray left Venice, which he did the middle of July following, he returned home through Padua, Verona, Milan, Turin, and Lyons. From all which places he writ

NOTE.

* The beginning of the firſt book of a didactic Poem, "De Principiis Cogitandi." The fragment which he now ſent contained the firſt 53 lines. The reader will find a further account of his deſign, and all that he finiſhed of the Poem, in a ſubſequent ſection.

writ either to his Father or Mother with great punctuality: but merely to inform them of his health and ſafety; about which (as might be expected) they were now very anxious, as he travelled with only a 'Laquais de Voyage.' Theſe letters do not even mention that he went out of his way to make a ſecond viſit to the Grande Chartreuſe *, and there wrote in the Album of the Fathers the following Alcaic † Ode, with which I conclude this Section.

O D E.

Oh Tu, ſeveri Religio loci,
Quocunque gaudes nomine (non leve
Nativa nam certè fluenta
Numen habet, vetereſque ſylvas;
Præſentiorem

NOTES.

* He was at Turin the 15th of Auguſt, and began to croſs the Alps the next day. On the 25th he reached Lyons; therefore it muſt have been between theſe two dates that he made this viſit.

† We ſaw in the 8th and 11th letters how much Mr. Gray was ſtruck with the awful ſcenery which ſurrounds the Chartreuſe, at a time his mind muſt have been in a far more tranquil ſtate than when he wrote this excellent Ode. It is marked,

Præſentiorem & conſpicimus Deum
Per invias rupes, fera per juga,
  Clivoſque præruptos, ſonantes
    Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem;
Quàm ſi repoſtus ſub trabe citreâ
Fulgeret auro, & Phidiacâ manu)
  Salve vocanti ritè, feſſo et
    Da placidam juveni quietem.
Quod ſi invidendis ſedibus, & frui
Fortuna ſacrâ lege ſilentii
  Vetat volentem, me reſorbens
    In medios violenta fluctus:
Saltem remoto des, Pater, angulo
Horas ſenectæ ducere liberas;
  Tutumque vulgari tumultu
    Surripias, hominumque curis.

NOTE.

marked, I think, with all the fineſt touches of his melancholy Muſe, and flows with ſuch an originality of expreſſion, that one can hardly lament he did not honour his own language by making it the vehicle of this noble imagery and pathetic ſentiment.

END OF THE SECOND SECTION,
AND SECOND VOLUME.

20 AU 66